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Mumia: A National Black Alert

By Gilda Rogers
Staff Writer

Not since Angela Davis' '60s and '70s Black Panther activism, which landed her in jail for 18 months has a political prisoner drawn such notoriety as Mumia Abu-Jamal. Davis, who ultimately was not convicted, today is a professor of philosophy at the University of Santa Cruz in California and is a staunch supporter of the 45-year-old journalist. Jamal has been in lock-up for 18 years on Pennsylvania's death row. He's been accused of killing Daniel Faulkner, a white Philadelphia police officer. From the very beginning, Jamal has said his trial was tainted by a bias judge and predominantly white jury.

Appeals have been filed on Jamal's behalf. Time is of the essence. And a solidarity black alert has been issued. On November 27, a National Emergency Rally will convene in Philadelphia. The Greater-Newark Millions for Mumia Campaign is appealing to the masses to gather at Newark Penna. Station at 9 a.m. For further information call (973) 624-1440.

On October 28th, federal judge William Yohn granted Jamal a limited stay of execution



Activist Zayid Muhammad (left in the army fatigue) speaks to protesters in support of the freeing Mumia Abu-Jamal, who is awaiting his December 2 execution. Organizations joining the rally include the People's Organization for Progress, American Friends Service Committee, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the Nation of Islam, African Echoes, the New Black Panther Party, and Women In Support of The Million Man March.

temporarily preventing his being executed on December 2, to further review the issues surrounding his appeal. The judge wants to examine both sides of the case. However, he can still deny Jamal a new trial. If he does, it would prevent any higher federal court from hearing anything

on all of the new evidence proving Jamal's innocence. A compelling composite of Jamal strapped to a gurney with a needle piercing through his vein ran on the front page of the "village VOICE," dated November 16. In essence, if the judge does not rule in Jamal's

favor for a new trial this graphic depiction will become a reality. Davis, who has visited with Jamal is hopeful that he will be exonerated, according to the article in the VOICE. This case has drummed up support nationwide and across the Atlantic. Rev. Al Sharpton is appealing to

ministers and their congregations to support Jamal, while celebrities like Whoopi Goldberg, Ed Asner, former South African President Nelson Mandela and others are rallying for the cause to save the celebrated journalist's life.

And the beat goes on ...

Police probe bias incidents at black church

WOODBIDGE (AP) — Racists have shouted slurs, spray-painted swastikas and slashed tires to harass worshippers at a new black church in a predominantly white neighborhood, officials said.

Members of the First Baptist Church said they are beginning to fear for their safety after the latest incident at their unfinished building. Church officials said problems actually began shortly after they purchased an old school in 1994 for conversion into a church and daycare center.

The church had been founded in 1909 in another part of town, but its growing congregation required the larger building.

First came the zoning opposition. Then racial slurs could be heard in the night. Derogatory graffiti and broken windows were next.

Rowinski said juveniles are probably to blame.

"People out here are trying to serve God and they have their tires slashed," said the pastor, Rev. Neva Lawson. "That's getting mean and vicious."

Lawson blames "a couple of bad apples" and emphasizes that other white neighbors have surprised church members and workers with juice and cupcakes.

Rowinski said police have increased patrols in the neighborhood in an effort to nab the vandals.

The first services at the new church building are scheduled to begin Nov. 14. Members have been worshipping at a community center in the meantime.

We need Danny Glover in Jersey City too!

By Gloria Dulan-Wilson
Staff Writer

Danny Glover, actor, activist, African American recently held a press conference in Manhattan about yellow cab drivers passing up him and his daughter, not once, but several times. Perhaps we need Mr. Glover to come to Jersey City as well. It was an unseasonably cold and blustery night in Jersey city. Several hundred night owls had just arrived at Journal Square from Manhattan. The last local buses had stopped operating for the evening, so that the only option for those who did not live in walking distance was Jersey City's yellow cab.

Would be passengers made their way across Pavonia Blvd. on the side of the old Stanley Theater, where taxis routinely wait, to obtain transportation home. There were, initially, no taxis in sight. About 5-to-10 minutes later the first taxi rolled up. Two African American men approached one of them and attempt to open the door. It's locked. Instead of opening the door, the taxi driver gets out on the driver's side and yells at them across the top of the car, "Where you going? where you going?"

One of the young men tells him their destination. The driver says, "I don't go there, I'm off duty." Gets back in the car

and pulls off. At the same time, three young African American men and a lady are going through the same thing, but this time the driver says, "I can't take four people." He likewise pulls off, but then stops and

"Hey man, you suppose to pick us up."

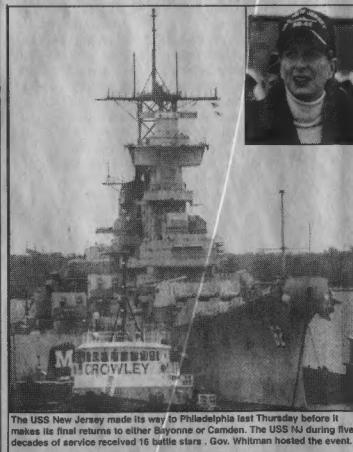
picks up a white male who has just crossed the street from the Journal Square station. One of the African American men yells, angrily, "Hey man, you suppose to pick us up. What's this about four people. We never heard that before." Another taxi pulls up and picks up a white woman without even considering passengers who are already there trying to get assistance. It took the two men, and the three men and one young woman nearly half an hour to get a taxi.

Interestingly enough, most of the drivers had foreign accents, either East Indian or Arabic. It was only after one of the men threatened to go to the police that the drivers finally provided them service. Racism,

in terms of passing up people of African heritage, appears to be alive and well and rampant in the Jersey City Yellow Cab company — by people who themselves have come here from other countries and other cultures. Perhaps they need a lesson in diversity. Perhaps they need to know that racism and racial profiling is not only against the law in the police department, but for taxi drivers as well. And someone should definitely inform the driver of car number OXW5154 CAR No. 27, that he can lose his license to drive a cab by passing up African Americans to pick up a white passenger.

It is unfortunately true that those who have come to the "land of the free" to seek their fortunes, having left dismal situations in their own homelands, have developed a heinous convenient form of amnesia, and are all too ready and willing to denigrate the very people who made it possible for them to be here in the first place. Many of these same people would not have jobs driving taxis had African Americans not picked and protested those companies when they were segregated to open up the very jobs they are prospering from today. If it takes someone in the personage and visibility of a Danny Glover to drive the point home, so be it. But, if Mr. Glover is not available, then it's up to the Black community in Jersey City to stand up for themselves, now!

Welcome Home!



The USS New Jersey made its way to Philadelphia last Thursday before it makes its final return to either Bayonne or Camden. The USS NJ during five decades of service received 16 battle stars. Gov. Whitman hosted the event.

New guns must be locked up under new state law

MONTCLAIR — Firearm dealers in New Jersey have to provide trigger locking devices or storage vaults when selling any handguns when a new state law goes into effect.

The law prohibits licensed retail firearm dealers from selling a handgun unless it is equipped with a trigger-lock device, a lock-equipped gun case or a "gun locker." Gun dealers who violate the new provisions would be charged with a disorderly persons offense, punishable by up to six months in jail and up to \$1,000 in fines.

"We have been gripped by gun violence in our schools," said prime cosponsor, Assembly Democratic Whip Nita H. Gill, "which underscores why greater strides must be taken to promote gun safety. This law puts the safety of children as part of the equation when a gun is sold."

Republican Assemblyman James Holzapfel, a former Ocean County prosecutor, sponsored the bill along with nine prime cosponsors and about 10 others.

"I equate trigger locks and lock boxes with child-proof safety caps on medicine bottles,"

Holzapfel said. "The tougher we make these weapons to access and operate, the fewer tragedies we'll have involving children."

The law requires the dealer to maintain in his records a notation that a trigger locking device was delivered as part of the handgun sale, also provides the state Department of Law and Public Safety with \$90,000 to distribute among the state's 21 county prosecutors so they can give free trigger safety locks to gun owners.

The trigger-lock law complements still-pending legislation that would promote the use of gun safety devices that help keep guns out of the hands of children. Gill noted. A package of bills awaiting Gov. Christie Whitman's signature would exempt the sales and use tax for firearm storage vaults and trigger safety locks — and provide a \$5 instant rebate for the purchase of trigger safety locks.

"The state needs to enact more meaningful laws targeting gun sales and make 'childproof' personalized weapons mandatory within five years for those who buy guns, Gill said.

'Prudential Positive Parenting' a plus for daycare

By Gilda Rogers
Staff Writer

NEWARK — It is one of the most challenging jobs a parent can have but when effectively orchestrated, being a parent can be the most rewarding job one can do. Prudential in its recognition of obstacles facing many of today's parents, the over 100-year mainstay in Newark has come up with a curriculum entitled — "Prudential Positive Parenting," designed to make the job a bit easier.

The comprehensive program has helped 200,000 parents nationwide with an education initiative that was developed by the Child Welfare League of America. On November 3-4, Prudential Positive Parenting made a stop at the Robert Treat Hotel in downtown Newark, where 45-to-50 daycare workers from across the city were invited to attend.

"The program provides everyone here with training, they can go back to their (daycare) centers to provide 12 sessions of two-hour seminars to the parents of the children in the centers," said Donna Taaffe, director of Programs for Parents, Inc.

The seminars have been conducted at 15 sites across the country. The 12-session two-hour curriculum is accompanied with books and handouts the daycare workers use to conduct seminars for the parents of the children attending their daycare facility.

The curriculum, which is also translated into Spanish approaches topics like the one outlined in session three, "Ages and Stages." It then works its way up to "Sibling Rivalry," always a hot spot which is covered in session 12.

Although not intensely designed to coincide with Gov. Christine Whitman's effort in raising the standards of quality daycare, Positive Parenting is indeed a tool to raise the standards for which the state is mandated to provide quality daycare for 46,000 three-and-four-year-old pre-school students.

"They (Prudential) approached us that, they wanted to do something about parenting and strengthening families," said Bruce Hershfield, director of Child Day Care Service at the Child Welfare League of America. "The project is designed to give information. Families aren't as grounded (longevity in communities) they move around more and because of this they don't have a strong support system, as families from before who had been in communities for generations. This curriculum fits in with the self-help movement going on today."

Betty Marriot Molina, who attended the seminar and represented La Casa De Deon Pedra (From Pedro's House) Daycare center said, "It's great, because we're working with concentrated information that comes with a lot of helpful handouts all in Spanish."

The workshop seminar being conducted on this day centered on the dos and don'ts of fostering the best self-image in a child. The instructor stressed low parents often give their children a compliment with a rider attached — meaning that but clasp parents seem to always throw in.

He used this example: "You cleaned your room so good but now only if you could keep it like this every day." He described these types of compliments as atypical and not the best way to promote a child's self-image.

Indeed, ideal, the fundamentally sound curriculum promotes the best in positive parenting.

Community Calendar

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

MILLBURN — The Paper Mill Playhouse hosts its Sixth Annual Food Drive to benefit the Community FoodBank of New Jersey. Call (908) 355-FOOD for information.

ATLANTIC CITY — The Rent Levelling Association of New Jersey hosts a workshop on what impact does rent control have on market rental rates at the New Atlantic City Convention Center. 3:45 p.m. (973) 269-4201.

ATLANTIC CITY — The New Jersey State League of Municipalities hosts its 84th Annual Conference at the New Atlantic City Convention Center through Nov. 19. Call (609) 695-3481 for information.

JERSEY CITY — New Jersey City University hosts its Eighth Annual Faculty/Skill Research Seminar at the school's Grossnick Hall. 12 p.m. (201) 230-3426.

NEWARK — The Newark Literacy Campaign hosts a training session for new volunteers at the Newark Public Library. 6 p.m. (973) 623-4001.

PARAMUS — The Bergen County Department of Health Services offers a free program to all adults age 60 or older on food safety at the Community Services Building. 1:30 p.m. (201) 599-8902.

ELIZABETH — Union County College hosts a job fair 10:30 a.m. (908) 709-7501.

TEANECK — Fortune Magazine hosts the Fourth Annual "Worldwide Lessons in Leadership Series" at the Marriott at Glenpointe. 10:45 a.m. 1-(800)-688-9771.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

NEWARK — The National Association of Black Accountants holds a general meeting at the Prudential Gateway Center. 6:30 p.m. (973) 236-5342.

DENVILLE — The Research and Development Council of New Jersey hosts its 1999 Science/Technology Media Dinner at the Liberty Science in Jersey City. Call (973) 627-5330 for information.

NEWARK — The Newark Literacy Campaign hosts a training session for new volunteers at the Newark Public Library. 6 p.m.

BERKLEY HEIGHTS — The RUNNELL'S Specialized Hospital of Union County hosts a support group meeting for those caring or living with Alzheimer's. 1 p.m. (908) 771-5515.

NEWARK — The New Jersey Institute for School Innovation hosts its 1,000 Friends Education Policy Luncheon featuring speaker David Grant at the Newark Club. 12 p.m. (973) 621-6631.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

NEWARK — The People's Organization for Progress (POP) hosts a fund-raiser and panel discussion on state takeover of schools at the WISOMMM (Women In Support Of the Million Man March) Mansion. 7 p.m. (973) 597-1275.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

NEWARK — The Newark Public Library hosts a poetry session. 11 a.m. (973) 733-7600.

PATERSON — Pi Xi Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. hosts a fashion show to benefit the students of Passaic County at the Brownstone. 11 a.m. (973) 777-4412.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

ELIZABETH — A night of giving and fun will be in store as Jersey Gardens Mall "Magical Night of Giving." 7 p.m. 1-(877) 642-1955.

COLDWELL — The Friends of Caldwell College hosts its 25th Annual Craft Show at the school's Student Center. 10 a.m. (973) 618-3209.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22

RED BANK — The New Jersey Center for the Hearing Arts hosts a parenting workshop. 8:45 p.m. (732) 946-2711.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

NEWARK — The Newark Literacy Campaign hosts a literacy training session for new volunteers at the Newark Public Library. 6 p.m. (973) 623-4001.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26

ORANGE — Noli Kae presents an exciting fashion show entitled "Millennium" at Rouzeau's Manor. 7 p.m. (973) 926-3556.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1

NEW YORK — The Lesbian and Gay Community Service Center commemorates World AIDS Day with The Sounds of Life at The Center. 7 p.m. (212) 620-7310.

NEW BRUNSWICK — The Hyacinth AIDS Foundation hosts a free legal information workshop at the New Jersey Legal Center. 9 a.m. 1-(800)-FREE-LAW.

Community Access recognizes local leaders



MOUNTAINSIDE — Community Access Unlimited held its 19th Annual Gala Dinner Dance at L'Affaire in MountainSide. The evening was a celebration meant to honor community leaders who have helped to make an impact in the lives of people with disabilities and is the agency's largest fund-raising event. Pictured here are (l-r) Assemblyman Gerald Green, Sid Blanchard, founder and executive director of Community Access and Plainfield Police Chief Edward Santiago. Santiago and Green were honored by Community Access for their work in the community.

Judy Keyes named to top post at Investors



MILLBURN — Judy Keyes was recently named as vice president/community relations officer for Investors Savings Bank. Her responsibility will be to measure how well investors meet the credit needs of those living in the areas the bank serves as well as coordinate community events throughout Investors' market area. Keyes started her career in the financial industry with Glen Rock Savings Bank in 1976. In 1982, she moved to Columbia Savings Bank, where she served as Training Officer and Community Development Officer. She earned an Associate Degree in Business from Thomas Edison State College in 1985 and is working toward a B.A. degree in Marketing at Ramapo College, from the Institute of Financial Education, of which she is the current president. Keyes is past secretary of the Paterson Rotary Club, past president Financial Women International, and vice president of the Paterson YMCA.

NJCU honors Wright, Ngangmuta, Almonte



JERSEY CITY — Seniors Rachel Wright (right) and Ngong Ngangmuta (center) and Junior Francis Almonte (second right) were among the New Jersey City University (NJCU) students athletes recently honored at an NJCU Intercollegiate Athletic Council campus reception. Wright, a member of the indoor/outdoor track team; Ngangmuta, a sweeper on the soccer team; and Almonte, a hitter on the volleyball team, were congratulated by (from the left) Edward Mednick, NJCU professor of sociology who chairs the university's athletic council, Dr. Carmela Kamoutous, NJCU professor of history and Larry Schiner NJCU director of athletics.

Pendleton James names A. Brown as Managing Director



NEW YORK — A. David Brown was recently named Managing Director of Pendleton James Associates' (PJA) New York office and head of firms recently launched Diversity Practice. Brown, a veteran human resources professional and proven recruiter, heads an experienced multi-ethnic team with access to skilled, quality candidates from various ethnic backgrounds poised for a variety of senior-level positions at blue-chip corporations. Brown joined the New York office of PJA after having served as Vice President of Worldwide Retail/Fashion Specialty Practice at Korn/Ferry International. Prior to his career in executive search, Brown served for 12 years as Senior Vice President for Human Resources at R. H. Macy & Co. Brown currently serves on the Board of Directors of Zale Corporation and The Sports Authority.

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NATIONAL BRIEF

AMERICAN AND NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATIONS' STATEMENT ON JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

(NNPA) — National Bar Association (NBA) President Harold D. Pope has announced that the NBA and the American Bar Association have issued the following joint statement criticizing the lack of diversity on the federal bench: "Statistics for the 105th Congress reveal that while only 14 percent of the white nominees were not confirmed by the end of that session of Congress, the comparable figure for nominees of color was 35 percent. Statistics also reveal that the Senate is slower to evaluate and vote on female nominees and nominees of color than on white males."

JOINT CENTER HOSTS CONFAB ON SKILL DEVELOPMENT FOR 21ST CENTURY BLACK WORKERS

(NNPA) — In spite of a dramatic improvement in employment opportunities for African Americans, continuing economic success depends on the skills they bring to the workplace. The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies recently addressed this issue at a conference on "Skills Development for Black Workers in the 21st Century" in Washington, D.C. The keynote speaker was Charlene Drew Jarvis, member of the D.C. City Council; chair of the Committee on Economic Development; and president of Southeastern American D.C. The conference examined the training needs of new and established workers, how workers currently acquire new skills, strategies to reduce racial gaps, and improvements in labor market conditions for African Americans. Other panel discussions included "Schools: What They Provide and How Much More They Need to Do?" "What Are Firms Looking For and What Training Do They Provide?" and "The Role of Public Policy in Skills Development." The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a nonpartisan and nonprofit organization, conducts research and analyses on public policy issues of concern to African Americans and other minorities and promotes their involvement in the governance process.

N.Y.'S LANGSTON HUGHES LIBRARY MOVES TO STATE-OF-ART FACILITY

(NNPA) — The Langston Hughes Community Library and Cultural Center, located in the Queens Borough of New York, recently marked a milestone in its history with the grand opening of a new 24,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art building. Named for writer and poet-laureate Langston Hughes, the library contains the Black Heritage Reference Center collection, over 40,000 volumes of material written about and related to Black culture. The collection is unique because it can be accessed from any library in the world through an "Interloan Request," a process by which libraries borrow materials from each other at the customer's request. Materials have circulated as far away as Canada and Europe. Other features of the Black Heritage Reference Center include the Schomburg Clipping File, Black Newspaper Microfilm Collection and the Amistad Research Center Microfilm Collection. Once housed in a Woolworth storefront, the 30-year-old library is one of the 63 branches of the Queens Borough Public Library system. And, it has been named the largest circulation library system in the country for the sixth year. For more information on library programs, services, locations, events and news, or to gain access to its databases, visit the Queens Library web site at <http://www.queenslibrary.org>

Why the current discussion on urban technology transfer misses the mark

By Professor Sidney Morse

(NNPA) — Talk to decision-makers controlling corporate giving about urban technology transfer and the likely response will be that the emphasis is on providing children access to the Internet by placing computers and modems inside the nation's public schools.

Unfortunately, this idea is being pushed at the expense of economic model development that leads to real job creation. While it is critically important to ensure that the current generation of primary and secondary students learn to participate in this new technology, the effects of these efforts will likely not be felt in the economy for a decade or more. And contrary to the tenor of the dialogue currently being offered, the Department of Education reports that about 89 percent of all public schools nationwide do have computer placement and are already connected to the Internet.

So, it would appear that something is "curiously" missing from the discussion that would compel a serious understanding of the effects the new technology can have now and in the future. Recent public forums held by the National Urban League, the NAACP and other notable organizations have all focused on what is becoming an "in vogue" description of Internet access: "The Great Digital Divide." The thrust of these discussions has largely been centered around the challenge of how to ensure Internet access to African Americans and Latinos and to encourage increased usage.

However, this debate misses one of the critical strategic issues that could have a profound effect on economic development in urban areas.



Nelson Gonzalez and East Orange Mayor, Robert Bowser discuss controls of newly acquired technology, open in urban areas. Merely having access to the Internet, while essential in terms of participating in a newly evolving global society, is not the total answer to the technology challenge. African Americans have fought long and hard during the course of the entire Civil Rights Movement for access to facilities and to be served by product and service providers while focusing less attention on the empowering effect of building businesses within their own communities.

Today's discussion regarding Internet access affords increased usage of computers by African Americans seems to be a continuation of that battle. Access alone will certainly provide a "connection" to the rapid pace of information transport, and it will facilitate African Americans having "equal opportunity" for on-line shopping, a phenomenon just beginning to take shape. But, what does it do for creating solutions to the stubborn economic challenges faced by many of the nation's urban centers? The current debate on urban technology transfer seriously misses the mark when the focus is centered around

access only.

The combined potential of new technology as a tool of empowerment is such that it cannot be ignored and should be filtered into the strategies of economic development in ways not thought of before. Jack Kyser, chief economist for the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation, recently stated in a panel discussion that the problem with urban development in South Central Los Angeles is the lack of contiguous parcels of industrial space exceeding 100,000 square feet. This is not dissimilar to the views of many economic development specialists across the country.

This new economy doesn't require large parcels of space to create enormous opportunity but is being viewed in traditional terms not unlike many economic issues affecting African Americans. The new "digital" economy is being driven by entrepreneurs.

Today, African-American and Latino owned business growth is not only the fastest growing segment in the country, but is also significantly outpacing the rate of growth of the economy as a whole. Yet,

there are still many challenges in getting those businesses "connected" to the new technology. These are "engines" that have the potential to create real jobs. Access to "broadband" technology and the availability of capital for creative entrepreneurs at the same level and in similar ways that facilitates technology development in suburban areas are just two of the issues that could stifle entrepreneurial growth in urban centers across the nation.

This challenge will require the attention of elected officials, public policy advocates, business leaders, educators and all other "interested" parties. Bringing needed resources and reshaping the value paradigm so that a new era of entrepreneurial growth can flourish in Urban America is the surest formula for producing sorely needed stimulus in economically depressed areas. This is the discussion we should be having, not just the "right" to use a computer. If, as a society, we are really serious about our children's well-being and their ability to participate in the "new economy," we should focus efforts today on providing jobs connected to that "new economy."

This will provide the kind of "strategic seeding" likely to show positive results now and over the next 10 years. African Americans would be wise to reserve judgment on their choice of a presidential candidate until they have heard what strategies all the candidates have in mind for dealing with this issue, perhaps the most important strategic issue of our time. To do otherwise would be equivalent, once again to missing an important opportunity to change the directions for African Americans in the 21st Century.

Study: Race is still the key to opportunity

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The most thorough study of urban inequality ever, focusing on four U.S. cities — Atlanta, Boston, Detroit, and Los Angeles — finds that discrimination poses a significant barrier to workers of color and those with little education.

"Despite vast white suburbanization and home ownership, racial segregation remains the norm in housing, education and other aspects of metropolitan life, while the commitment to deliberate policies of integration is in open retreat," the study finds.

Over five years, the Multi-City Study of Urban Inequality tracked labor market participation, inequality and political attitudes among 9,000 households and 3,500 employers. Researchers found race matters a lot, influencing employers' perception of skills and of the desirability of different locations as business sites and areas from which to recruit.

Cosponsored by the Russell Sage Foundation and Harvard University, key findings include:

- Under 10 percent of jobs in metro areas are available for high-school grads without major skills
- Native-born blacks are losing jobs to recent immigrants
- The housing and labor markets are highly segregated.

For 50 years and faster during the last 20 years, urban economies have grown more decentralized, global and more heavily reliant on finance, services and technology than their former base of manufacturing. They manifest "deeply troubling" trends: slower growth and declining wages for the lowest earners; fast-rising financial inequality, are manifest.

Spurred by public policies and subsidized infrastructure, residential and industrial space has decentralized population and employment, accompanied by "persistent racial residential segregation," the study finds.

The Website is at www.ksg.harvard.edu/inequality/Seminar/4cities.htm.

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'Everything is everything'

My daughter and I had one of the most thought provoking and enlightening conversations the other night, which centered on death. She expressed to me that sometimes she thinks about it for hours on end. I quickly told her she was spending far too much time on something that's totally out of her hands. The mystery of death seemed to be the focus of the conversation and it was this aspect that troubled her. Again, I explained we have no way of knowing when and how we will face the unknown. And while ensuring her if she thought about it more spiritually then maybe she could free herself of the conundrum. Enlightening, yes, the conversation served a purpose. I realized while we sat up close on the side of the bed just how important to live in the moment — it's a very freeing thing to do, to live in the moment. Maybe almost as freeing as death—huh, what do you think? After all, how often is it that we do just what we want in terms of making ourselves happy and peacefully content in the moment. Not often, because we spend too much time engaged in things that create havoc and drama in our day-to-day lives. Let it go and live in the moment. This is what I instructed my daughter to do. "Everything is everything, what is meant to be will be," says wordsmith Lauryn Hill and you know what, she's right!

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

An open letter to Carson Dunbar

Dear Sir,
Upon beginning your tenure as executive director of the New Jersey State Police, we want you to know our organization's views on the issue of racial profiling and police brutality.

Your appointment has been seen by some as a way of addressing this problem. However, we believe it is necessary for our organization and other human rights and rights groups to continue to monitor the actions of the New Jersey State Police as they relate to this issue.

Racial profiling and police brutality are life and death issues for our community. We regard racial profiling and the overwhelming majority of incidents of police brutality as racist attacks upon our community. We believe the problem persists due to the failure of government at local, state and national levels to take significant action. During the past decade, more than 2,000 people across the country have been killed and many more have been injured in police brutality related incidents.

We believe that racial profiling and police brutality are the result of institutionalized racism that exists within state, local, and federal police forces, and the entire criminal justice system. (That someone who is black was appointed to "reverse" your efforts is further evidence of this).

The 'Show Me' State

By Courtney Cannon-Scott

I recently returned from Missouri where I attended the Underground Railroad Forum and the 100th Anniversary of the Emancipation of Freedom Celebration in St. Louis. Although it was my second time in that city, it was a first-rate trip.

St. Louis has been called the "Gateway to the West." It was a gateway through which many of our ancestors of African descent passed. Before Missouri became a part of the United States, it was first owned by France and then by Spain. Missouri was admitted to the Union as the 24th state on Aug. 10, 1820. It came in as a slave state, but it sided with the north throughout the Civil War.

One of the things I have learned while researching family history is that "everything" is important. My own family originated in Alabama and West Virginia, but has branches in many other states—including Missouri. So much of history is connected. It is impossible to look at one event or people without at least knowing how they fit into the larger picture.

A multitude of individuals make up the history of Missouri: Native American Indians, European settlers, free and enslaved people of color, and children from orphan trains whose parentage will forever be unknown.

Did you know that the first Black American printed in the

Our organization did not object to your appointment, but we believe the entire organization must be reformed from top to bottom. The following steps should be taken immediately:

* The establishment of an independent civilian control state police review board with subpoena powers. Police forces at state and local levels must be under civilian authority.

* Revision of state police policies to reflect zero tolerance for racist practices.

* Increased hiring of African American and Hispanic officers and the promotion of more minority officers to supervisory and leadership positions.

* Implementation of racial bias testing for state troopers and trooper candidates. Community sensitivity training for all troopers.

* An end to all racist and discriminatory practices that negatively affect minority communities.

* A moratorium on building new prisons that serve merely as slave labor plantations and are faced with an historic opportunity. You can build a memorable legacy with the state police based on meaningful and significant reform, or you based on racist changes soon to be forgotten. We anxiously await your response.

Sincerely,

People's Organization For Progress

The U.S. was Augustus Tolson from Missouri? Did you know that Route 66, through Missouri, was the first interstate highway to connect Chicago with Los Angeles? Did you know that the city of St. Louis was the site of the Underground Railroad in Missouri?

When history becomes personal, it also becomes interesting. To quote my friend, Anita Dixon-Andrews, who coordinated the St. Louis event I attended and later spoke on a tour of Kansas City. "With the approaching millennium, many are looking to the year 2000 and beyond to preserve legacies and artifacts from our collective past. The theme of the year of the Underground Railroad Forum and beacon of Freedom Celebration she hosted was 'Futures Built On Freedom.' The theme that encouraged the progress of education, historic preservation and cultural arts as they pertain to the ongoing struggle for freedom and personal expression."

I went to Missouri to tell a story not to see or hear one, but to see and hear one. I just want to know more there is to know. In teaching, I became a student. We should honor the pioneers and freedom fighters in our history because they gave us life. The story of our legacy — a rich, diverse heritage — one we must learn about, appreciate and pass it on.

By Nancy Parello

The state knew Hassan Northern. Social workers had been dispatched six times to investigate reports that the boy and his siblings were being abused or neglected. Those reports to the State Division of Youth and Family Services said Hassan's mother, Diana Northern, 25, beat her children, left them alone, fed them rancid food and was using drugs, according to Andy Williams, DYFS spokesman. None of those allegations were ever proven. The four children continued to live with their mother. Then, on June 27, 1999, Hassan, 5, plunged to his death from a window of the family's fifth-floor Newark apartment. His mother had left the kids, ages 2 to 6, alone while she went to the store and then chatted with neighbors, according to published reports.

The state knew other children like Hassan. A review of 20 cases in which 21 children died as a result of abuse or neglect suggests DYFS caseworkers often failed to gather enough evidence to prove a child was in danger, according to information gathered together from interviews with DYFS officials. Without proof of abuse, the state can't take significant steps to protect a child. These cases involved a total of 66 reports of child abuse or neglect. But state caseworkers proved only 13, or 19 percent, of those reports, said Williams.

When caseworkers were able to "substantiate" reports of abuse it usually involved an obvious claim, such as a mother abandoning a newborn at the hospital. Workers also proved abuse when a parent admitted to it, according to information DYFS officials provided from state case records. DYFS caseworkers sometimes failed to follow standard investigation procedures, such as interviewing teachers,

police or others who might help prove whether a child needs state protection, Williams said.

This is the first time in the history of child protection that the public can get some information about how the state tried to safeguard abused children who later died. In July 1997, Gov. Christie Whitman complied with federal law when she signed a state statute providing limited

A review of 20 cases in which 21 children died as a result of abuse or neglect suggests DYFS caseworkers often failed to gather enough evidence to prove a child was in danger.

ed public access to certain information about a child death when abuse or neglect is suspected or proven. Previously, that information was confidential.

Since January 1997, about 300 children have died whose families were, at one time or other, investigated by DYFS. Of those deaths, the vast majority — 214 — were ruled accidental, suicides or from natural or undetermined causes and so are exempt from the disclosure law.

Williams said 44 children died as a result of abuse or neglect from January 1997 to June 1999. Of those, DYFS officials agreed to provide information on 20 cases, involving 21 children. The state is withholding information on six cases at the request of county prosecutors who are still investigating, said Williams. The others occurred before the law went into effect, he said. These represent just a tiny percentage of the 50,000 children DYFS

has on its caseload each year and the 9,000 children who are in either foster homes or state institutions.

DYFS director Charlie Venti refused to allow direct access to case records because they sometimes contain information about siblings whose privacy must still be protected. He was also reluctant to answer questions about the investigation of these cases.

"The intent of the law is not to disclose every activity that occurred in each case," said Venti.

Experts say both the federal and state law are so vague that states can pretty much decide which information they want to release. But, Venti conceded that without thorough investigations, the state can't help abused children. And, the division's own regulations allow the state to release information about steps it took to protect children who have died. The information the state did provide shows that many investigations are "conducted according to division policy," Venti admitted. But, he said that is the exception, not the rule. In some cases, workers may have conducted "extra" investigations, he added. They just never wrote it down.

In at least seven of the 20 cases, workers failed to interview obvious outside sources, such as neighbors or teachers, who might have helped provide information about a family, according to Williams.

Child advocates say New Jersey caseworkers are under too much pressure to quickly investigate close cases, so they deal only with those that seem most severe.

Remembering Kwame Ture!

By Dr. Conrad W. Worrill

On the morning of November 15, 1998 it was learned that Kwame Ture (a.k.a. Stokely Carmichael) had made his transition into eternity (died in Conary, Guinea).

Along with Henry Young of the Black United Front of Illinois, (who is the administrator of the Kwame Ture Medical Fund) Saraduray Savanhu of the All African Peoples Revolutionary Party (A-APRP), we were fortunate and honored to attend the memorial tribute and burial of Brother Kwame on November 22nd in the Congo, Guinea where he had lived, worked, studied, taught, and struggled for the past thirty years.

On the anniversary of his transition, we must always remember Brother Kwame's contributions to the worldwide African Liberation Movement. Since the late 1960s, Brother Kwame Ture has been one of the chief spokespersons and organizers for the All African Peoples Revolutionary Party (A-APRP), where he had lived in the Republic of Guinea in West Africa. While in Guinea, Brother Ture studied with and worked under the guidance of the late President of Guinea, Ahmed Sekou Ture and the late President of Ghana, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah.

Most people throughout the world began to hear of Kwame (a.k.a. Stokely Carmichael) during the 1960s when he participated in the first Freedom Riders and many sit-ins and marches.

During his Kwame Ture participation in the Civil Rights Movement began during his high school years at Bronx High School of Science where he graduated in 1960. Kwame always had a tendency to be active around the movement circles in New York while in high school and this continued when he enrolled at Howard University in 1960.

Primary source documents reveal that, "In the Winter of 1960, Black college students in dozens of communities across this country conducted sit-ins to secure the desegregation of lunch counters in drug and variety stores. These sources go on to explain that, 'Arrests numbered in the thousands. On every major college campus in this country, students organized groups such as NAG (The Non Violent Action Group) at Howard University to continue the Sit-In Movement.' Kwame was a founding member of NAG and was one of its early leaders.

Out of this student activism,

the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was formed at Shaw University in April of 1960 and SNCC and its student base provided ground troops for almost every major Civil Rights Demonstration and Campaign during the 1960's period the Movement. Kwame Ture was one of the "Freedom Riders" that were arrested in Mississippi and Alabama during the Spring and Summer of 1961. From that point on, Kwame participated in every major campaign that emerged.

Kwame came to the public's attention in November 1965 when Look Magazine featured an article titled "Freedom Road," that mentioned Kwame's role as an organizer and leader in SNCC.

Several months later in June of 1966, "Ebony Magazine" historian, and writer, Lerone Bennett observed in this article that (a.k.a. Carmichael) Kwame King, "other young men of hope, anger, and public concern." Bennett asked the question, "Who is this young man? What does he want? What does he mean by Black Power?"

Again, primary source documents explain that, "In April, 1966, at the Kingston (Jamaica) SNCC state conference (a.k.a. Stokely) was elected chairman, ushering in a new level and direction for both the organization and a larger movement of which it was an integral part." These same sources indicate that, "In June, after James Meredith was gunned down on a highway in Mississippi, (a.k.a. Stokely) sounded the new Black mood." This is what Kwame said: "The only way we are gonna stop this white from oppressing us is to take over. We've enjoyed freedom for six years and we ain't got nothing. What we gonna do is saying now is BLACK POWER!"

Kwame was one of the leading advocates of Pan-Africanism through his leadership in the A-APRP. Since the early 1960s, Kwame has traveled throughout the world lecturing and organizing African people to understand the need to struggle around the idea of Pan-Africanism, "as the only solution to our problems."

When people in our movement give unselfishly, and consistently over the years, like Kwame, we must give back when they are in need.

Fighting for a minimum wage hike

By Norman Hill

Since 1980 the radical right has controlled either the White House or Congress, except for two years. Because the reactionaries speak for corporate interests rather than the needs of America's working families, it is not surprising that their rising political influence has meant a reduction in the real value of the minimum wage, discouraging inflation.

Specifically, the real minimum wage is now worth 19 percent less than in 1979, just before Ronald Reagan became president, because increases have been few and far between since that time. The situation would be even worse except that a reluctant right-wing Congress under some strong pressure from the labor and its allies, felt compelled to vote a 90-cent hike to \$5.15 in 1996.

Now Congress is debating proposals to increase the Fair Minimum Wage. The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 1999 has been introduced by Senator Kennedy before the U.S. Senate and Congressman David Bonior has introduced House Bill #325 to increase the minimum wage. They would raise the minimum wage by another dollar to \$6.15, which would bring it back to its 1979 value. The corporations and their political allies oppose the hike, of course, and once again are offering their stale, discredited objections. One old argument is that increases in the minimum wage hurt the very people they are supposed to help by forcing employers who pay the minimum wage to lay off workers.

It's nice, isn't it, that the corporations and the reactionaries spear carriers are finally expressing such concern for low-income workers? Except that recent studies have shown that such job losses are virtually nonexistent, especially in a time of economic expansion like ours. After the last minimum

wage hike three years ago, unemployment came down, especially among low-wage workers.

Minimum wage boosts can actually help employers. Better paid workers are likely to be more content and more motivated. Therefore, they will probably be more productive. Furthermore, they will be less likely to quit. With less turnover, the employer will save the costs of recruitment and training.

Another phony argument against minimum wage increases is that they mostly benefit teenagers from wealthy families who want extra pocket money. The truth is that fully 72 percent of minimum-wage earners are adults. Half of them work full time. Another one-third work at least 20 hours a week. Far from having affluent backgrounds, minimum wage earners come from families whose "parent" income averages \$15,000 below the national average.

Currently, those earning minimum wage and working full time make some \$10,700 a year, about \$3,000 below the poverty line for a family of three. The proposed one-dollar-an-hour pay boost would make a big dent in cutting poverty for the lowest wage earners. So far from helping primarily the affluent, the Kennedy proposal would provide crucial help to the segment of the work force that most needs it.

An increase of the minimum wage to \$6.15 would help all 11.8 million Americans who now earn less than that. That's the reason to look toward next national elections as an opportunity to fire the federal government from the sidelines given the enormous sacrifices their allies and return it to the friends of America's working families.

Norman Hill president of the A. Phillip Randolph Institute

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Religion

November 17 — November 23, 1999

RELIGION CALENDAR

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

EAST ORANGE — Inani Baptist Church of Christ hosts its Seventh Anniversary Church Banquet. 8 p.m. (973) 678-7222.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

EDISON — Mt Zion U.F.W. Baptist Church presents the gospel play "Don't Mess Heaven and Go To Hell." 7:30 p.m. (908) 233-1466.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

BELLEVILLE — Christ Episcopal Church hosts its Festival Ecumenical. 10 a.m. 973 751-0016.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27

NEW BRUNSWICK — Sixth Annual Spurgeonick show at the State Theatre. Featuring Dottie Peoples and Marcy Jackson. 6 p.m. (732) 422-6674.

Prayer Corner

Beautiful Woman
Why wait on someone else to cherish the beautiful woman you are? Pardon me...

"I'm just lovin' me for a moment this morning. I woke up this morning to the smell of my apple conditioned hair. As I lay on my satin sheets, I noticed the beautiful outline of my vessel."

It came to me... I am a resurrected vessel... Beautiful. Moving into another level of wholeness. I think I ought to love me this morning... Pardon me...

"I'm just lovin' me for a moment this morning. I woke up this morning to the pattern of my own shadow. No matter where I turn, I cannot separate what I reflect in my shadow."

I can not only see it, but I appreciate it. I am a perfect God cake. I take that much time in molding me, loving me, cherishing me, reaping me... when surely I am worth loving me. Pardon me...

"I'm just lovin' me for a moment this morning. I woke up this morning alone but not lonely. I got tired of waiting for someone to put ice in my soda, milk in my tea, jam on my biscuits, peas in my rice, and soup on my back. I am not alone, I have me... I have me... I have me... and then I have an omnipresent God who has me."

When I put the ice in my soda. He stands there silently observing me ready to assist in creative ways to set my table. Pardon me...

"I'm just lovin' me for a moment this morning. I woke up this morning and beheld the beautiful reflection of a four, five or six feet something frame, a soft smile, beautiful full lips a rounded broad nose curly hair, brown skinned complexion, and a Bible book perfect shape I leaned forward and kissed the mirror... I love you girl!!"

Not because mama said you were beautiful... No because God values you. Because God loves you. When I look at all your attributes, and I think about what God had predestined you to become... I can only say that I love you."

For all the battles you've conquered... For the tears you've shed... For the negative words that you shot down... For the pain you've overcome... For the growth you've sustained. I love you girl! Pardon me...

"I'm just lovin' me for a moment this morning... Pardon me ladies... I'm just lovin' me."

SAVE THE DATE!

City News
100 Most Influential
April 27, 2000
at NJPAC

Painting of a black Virgin Mary sparks an international debate

By Toye Olori

LAGOS (IPS) — The painting of a Black Virgin Mary by a London-based Nigerian artist, Chris Ofili, has sparked a heated international debate.

The painting, which has been exhibited in the Brooklyn Museum for almost a month, depicts a black Virgin Mary surrounded by cutouts from pornographic magazines and images of elephant dung. Besides enraging Catherine Acholoni, special advisor to Nigeria's President of Arts and Culture Olusegun Obasanjo, the painting has also sparked a heated debate throughout the country.

In a statement, Acholoni called the painting an abuse of African womanhood and motherhood. She said the Virgin Mary represented the African equivalent of a matriarch who should be seen as a role model for young women and mothers. She said the symbolism of elephant dung used in Ofili's painting, "Secularism," violated all the artistic and cultural traditions of Africa.

All over the continent and in Nigeria, African traditional behavior is distinguished by cleanliness, restraint and a sense of order and propriety.

"Africans don't plaster them-

selves or their environment with feces, a substance which they view with disdain," said Acholoni, a playwright, poet and literary critic.

She noted that, while democratization has restored free speech, African creative artists should not use it to promote such decadent art as portrayed by the Ofili painting.

"Sensationalism is one sure way to derail entire generations of inquiring young African minds. The painting further cheapens African culture, womanhood and spirituality by portraying Africans as incapable of conceiving a spiritual phenomenon, such as the Madonna, without smearing it with filth and obscenity," Acholoni said.

She also said the argument that elephant dung has been used as a means of expression in African art is completely false.

"It is a fallacy. What feces is in Africa is what feces is all over the world. It is something that is dirty. Ofili should have a rethink," she said. "African men are mother worshippers and so Virgin Mary should not be painted with dung. Every African woman will take exception to the interposition and mixing of the idea of a matriarch with pornography. We can't afford the luxury that corrupts our chil-

dren and messes up the images and icons of the society," she said.

At the heart of the controversy, generated by the exhibition of Ofili's painting, New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani threatened to evict the museum and cut off its \$7.2 million subsidy unless the exhibition was canceled. However, Dale Jegede, a Nigerian arts teacher in Indiana State University, was quoted by newspapers as saying that Ofili has been misunderstood in the painting.

"One thing I don't like in the whole issue is that Ofili used elephant dung from his African home. It is all a misunderstanding," Jegede said. "I find it really problematic for people to see an artist in that light. What happens if Ofili had been a German or Briton?"

Francis Nwosu, a journalist and an art critic, does not see anything wrong or controversial about the painting.

"As an artist, he can represent Virgin Mary the way he feels and perceives her. How are we sure Virgin Mary was not Black and if she was not as beautiful as the early Christians and artists of those days portrayed her? That also was a product of their thinking and an artistic impression by them," Nwosu told IPS.

59th National Bible Week comes full circle

NEW YORK — Encouraging everyone to read the all-time best seller — the Bible — is the focus of the 59th annual celebration of National Bible Week, November 21 through 28, 1999.

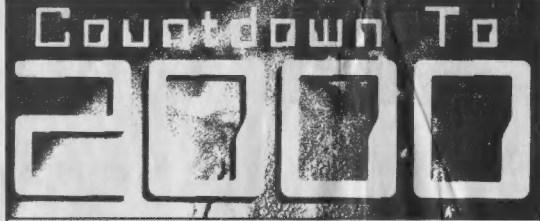
"The Bible has had an undeniable influence on our culture's art, music, literature, laws and even our sense of charity. For that reason alone people should want to be familiar with this book," says Stewart Furlong, Chairman of the

sponsoring organization, the National Bible Association.

Perhaps more importantly, countless millions of people over the centuries have looked to the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures for moral and spiritual guidance. One of them, William E. Simon, former Secretary of the Treasury, is chairing National Bible Week this year. Mr. Simon recently said he feels privileged to have a part in this celebration that simply encourages others to

pick up a Bible and read it because, "In the Bible I personally find the nourishment I need for my daily life."

The first National Bible Week was organized by business and community leaders 59 years ago to offer the nation a source of comfort and hope in the dark days when Europe was engulfed in World War II.



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POSITIVELY BLACK

Substitute your confidence for fear

By Junior Ricardo Stanton

(NNPA) — "Fear is a wearying state. It soon brings on moral fatigue and when it cannot resolve itself in constructive, restorative activity, it resigns a person to hostility." Samuel DeWitt Proctor.

During our long sojourn in this hemisphere, fear and terrorism were the primary tools used by our oppressors to maintain their hegemony over us in this immoral and unjust system. The slave masters and their functionaries employed mind boggling brutality and violence to discourage open rebellion and keep us "in line" and "in our place."

Black folks were fearful of the safety of family members and friends during slavery, the Jim Crow era and even today. We need to remember and understand this so we fully grasp where our fears and phobias originate. Africans in America lived in constant fear and frustration because of the ruthless restrictions and conditions we endured in this oppressive culture.

The oppression went beyond racial discrimination, socio-economic caste and disenfranchisement. Not to allow a group of people the opportunity to discover, develop or actualize their innate potential or genetic possibilities was the ultimate form of dehumanization. As the late Rev. Samuel D. Proctor said, "Fear is a wearying state." Living in a constant terror and dread or even the milder forms of anxiety and distress takes a heavy toll on us. This is the real reason our collective health is so poor.

We are killing ourselves softly by suppressing our own immune systems with worry, self-hatred and feelings of hopelessness. Anger, frustration, rage and depression are the causes of much of the disharmony and disease we experience in our community. The collective dysfunction we see in our neighborhoods is the result of a trans-generational program and process of debasement, miseducation and institutionalized racism. We are suffering from a type of group post traumatic disorder.

The experiences we suffered during the capture, the long treks to the holding castles, the Trans-Atlantic middle passage, the dehumanizing seasoning process, slavery and the deliberate brainwashing and reprogramming of our minds has had a devastating effect on us. It is so traumatic

it is impressed on our collective unconscious. It's percolating just beneath the surface of our conscious mind. Add to that history the ongoing distress of being Black in a culture pathologically obsessed with color, race, class and gender and you understand why we are so traumatized and disoriented.

This deliberate stupefaction prevents us from even accessing a source of potential healing from our inner selves. We have been tricked into being outer directed. We have been taught to seek validation and acceptance from the very people (or their heirs) who put us in this predicament in the first place. Life is lived from the inside out. Our disease is the result of our response to psychological, emotional and physical conditions. It stands to reason then, that our healing can only come from a change in our cognitive and behavioral responses.

We must be confident that we have within us the wisdom, resources, wherewithal and strength to solve our problems. We always have a choice. We can choose how we interpret, frame or respond to any situation that confronts us. We can choose to give up or we can choose to search for solutions. On a conscious level we may not know or have access to an answer, however on a subconscious or deeper level answers abound. We can always choose to go within where the solutions are. We can activate our minds, tap into the limitless potential of our imaginations and our connection to omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence.

Everywhere we are God is because the Kingdom of God is within us. Everywhere God is, all is well. Fear is wearying, but accessing divine intelligence/powers buoy our spirits, and empowers us. When you are down and depressed, stop in your tracks and get centered. Take several deep abdominal breaths, clear your mind and regain control of yourself. The deep breathing will energize and revitalize you and clear your mind so you can be receptive to new ideas and see things in a more favorable light. You can overcome fear. You overcome fear by substituting powerful and positive ideas and feelings in its place. Empowerment begins with us. Human beings access power by releasing intrinsic energies already present within us. Try it.

New Jersey Department of Human Services
Division of Youth and Family Services

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If you have any questions call 1-800-409-8773, M-F, 9 AM to 5 PM. Bell Atlantic is here to help. That's something that will never change.



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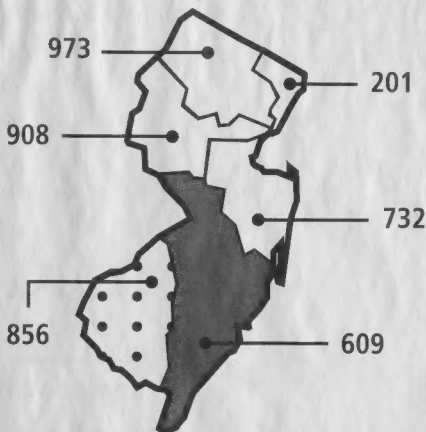
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(973) 221, 229, 246, 270, 291, 296, 329, 337, 342, 343, 368, 381, 405, 438, 440, 441, 457, 460, 475, 487, 488, 489, 498, 507, 508, 518, 525, 527, 528, 531, 559, 587, 641, 646, 651, 695, 703, 712, 752, 791, 794, 796, 797, 804, 807, 814, 842, 843, 845, 883, 896, 909, 931, 932, 933, 935, 939, 955, 964, 968, 991, 996, 997, 998

If you live in any of the following exchanges, beginning November 29, you must now dial 1 + the area code for all calls between area codes 908 and 732:

(908) 205, 214, 220, 225, 235, 243, 246, 247, 248, 249, 258, 271, 283, 287, 293, 296, 297, 302, 321, 324, 336, 339, 340, 342, 346, 348, 356, 357, 361, 373, 381, 382, 388, 393, 394, 396, 398, 404, 417, 418, 422, 424, 428, 434, 435, 442, 445, 447, 448, 457, 463, 465, 469, 476, 484, 491, 494, 499, 509, 514, 519, 524, 529, 543, 545, 548, 549, 560, 562, 563, 572, 574, 584, 590, 594, 603, 623, 627, 628, 632, 635, 645, 648, 650, 652, 661, 667, 680, 697, 699, 733, 738, 743, 744, 745, 748, 752, 764, 767, 777, 798, 799, 805, 819, 821, 826, 827, 828, 843, 844, 846, 857, 867, 868, 871, 873, 878, 882, 885, 906, 913, 926, 932, 934, 937, 940, 943, 951, 968, 971, 980, 981, 985

(732) 204, 218, 221, 226, 231, 232, 233, 234, 252, 253, 266, 272, 276, 281, 301, 306, 317, 322, 333, 359, 412, 429, 444, 470, 474, 486, 490, 497, 518, 523, 526, 533, 546, 547, 559, 561, 575, 580, 587, 588, 595, 604, 626, 630, 644, 647, 653, 654, 655, 658, 666, 668, 685, 696, 704, 707, 709, 719, 722, 725, 731, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 766, 769, 781, 789, 791, 822, 848, 860, 862, 874, 877, 889, 894, 903, 904, 925, 931, 941, 947, 953, 956, 960, 986, 991, 992, 997



Local Briefs

Technology for the new millennium unveiled at Newark school

NEWARK — The Newark Public Schools and the Office of Instructional Technology, in conjunction with the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), recently held the 12th Annual Computer Fair at the NJIT William Hazel Center's multi-purpose room. The theme for this year's computer fair was Technology, A Bridge to the New Millennium, and featured students demonstrating the latest computer technology in robotics, the Internet, CD-ROM, desktop publishing, and video and sound digitizing. A variety of demonstrations was conducted by a host of vendors including Compaq, Microsoft, Incom, Transnet and Hewlett-Packard. In addition Compaq gave free t-shirts to all students attending the fair.

Newark students to rally against drugs

NEWARK — Students attending Louise A. Spencer School in Newark, along with representatives from Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey, the Newark Police Department, Communities in Schools, nursing students from Rutgers University and substance abuse counseling students from Montclair State University recently participated in an anti-drugs march on One hundred seventy-five school students, from grades two and five, will carry the school banner and posters declaring anti-drugs messages, such as "Say No to Drugs". The students made the posters as part of their substance abuse awareness classes. The march started in front of Louise A. Spencer School, and proceeded along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Clinton Avenue, Avon Avenue and Irving Turner Boulevard before returning to the school.

Money for local, county planning now available from state

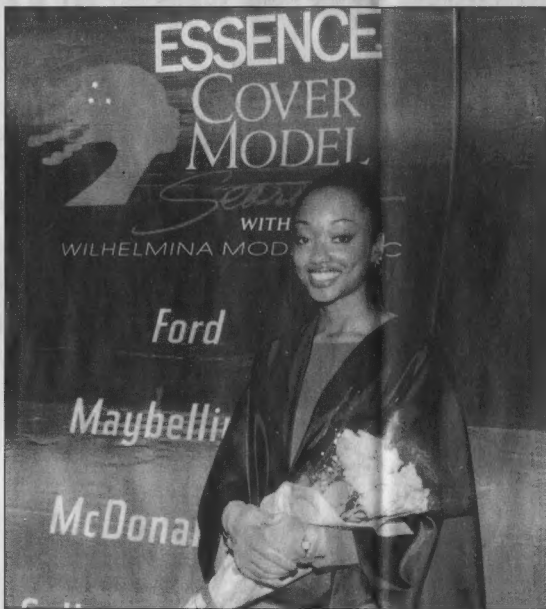
TRINTON — Mayors of every municipality in New Jersey recently received letters from the state announcing that \$3 million in "Smart Growth Planning Grants" are now available.

The money has been set aside to encourage communities to develop sound plans and strategies to guide local land use decisions, said Jane M. Kenny, Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. "Thanks to Governor Whitman, we'll be preserving a million acres of open space in our state over the next decade. It's more important than ever that we make wise choices about how we develop and redevelop land in our cities and towns," Commissioner Kenny said. Kenny said the goal of "smart growth" is to create more livable and sustainable communities that protect today's resources so they are there for the future. These planning grants represent the first time the state has been able to provide the wide financial support for local planning efforts that many cities and towns have requested. Commissioner Kenny said the state will begin accepting proposals from municipalities and counties at once, and continue until all the money has been allocated.

Applications available for Jr. Police Academy

NEWARK — The Essex County Prosecutor's Office is presently accepting applications for the February 2000, Junior Police Academy. The 13 week program is open to all Essex County residents from ages (11) through thirteen (13), and in school grades 6th, 7th or 8th. Acting Prosecutor Campolo said, "The program is designed to develop positive relationships between the youth of our County and the Law Enforcement Community, and at the same time teach the children discipline, respect and responsibility." The second class is currently in its 6th week and will continue through mid-December. The application deadline is January 15, 2000. The course topics include the following: The United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, Introduction to the Criminal Justice System, Homicide and Crime Scene Investigations; Bias Crimes; Arson and K-9 Investigations; Gang Awareness; Internet Crimes; Most Court Cases; Safety; Drug Awareness and Peer Pressure. Information about the Junior Police Academy and an application booklet are available by contacting Captain Robert Carella (973) 618-2006. The class meets one evening per week for thirteen (13) weeks at the Essex County Police Academy in Cedar Grove. The Junior Police Academy is no cost to participants.

Mauldin a finalist in Essence Model Search



Winner Tiffany Mauldin, a Hillside resident stands proud after being named the New York-New Jersey area finalist of the ESSENCE Cover Model Search with Wilhelmina Models. The contests was held at Livingston Mall in New Jersey on October 30. Mauldin will be among ten finalists flown to New York City to compete for an appearance on the cover of ESSENCE, a combined \$150,000 in modeling contracts and great prizes. Though the mall contests have wrapped up, entry forms are being accepted via mail or the Internet. Entries for the contests should be postmarked no later than December 15, 1999. For more information, see the November and December issues of ESSENCE Magazine or visit the ESSENCE Web site at www.essence.com.

Multi-million dollar project to reconstruct housing

NEW BRUNSWICK — A \$13 million dollar reconstruction project for 124 units of the Hampton Club Condominium complex recently demolished vandalized and fire-damaged buildings. The First Baptist Development and Urban Renewal Corporation secured a \$1,250,000 housing incentive fund grant from the Urban Home Owner Recovery Program of the NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFJA) and received another \$6.8 million in loans. Other significant plans includes refinishing the common areas of each building, improvements made to selected parking areas and landscaping, and the allocation of one million dollars to fully fund the

capital improvement reserve.

The First Baptist Development and Urban Renewal Corporation will begin to contact the 800 interested parties within over the years have contacted their Somerset office. Partnerships with "Too Good But 103 True" of the HMFJA, who have contributed \$3 million dollars, and several private banks will allow the First Baptist Development and Urban Renewal Corporation to offer low cost mortgages. The corporation anticipates selling the renovated two to four bedroom units at an estimated market value ranging from \$50,000 to \$80,000 in around two years. Twenty-five of the units have been identified for

subsidized housing by the city of New Brunswick.

First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens will have an active role in managing the property. According to executive pastor, Rev. Larry Williams, "This is an answer to lot of prayers. The Church, the neighborhood, and partners from all over have been praying for our housing ministry for a long time." The church renegotiated a real-estate tax abatement agreement allowing homeowners who occupy their unit to receive a tax release. In addition, First Baptist Church, has committed to paying over \$300,000 to the condo maintenance association.

New HUD budget will bring millions of dollars to NJ in 2000

NEWARK • Communities in New Jersey will get an estimated \$655,789,000 in assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year 2000 for rental assistance vouchers for poor families, job creation, assistance to homeless people, and public housing operating subsidies. Secretary Andrew Cuomo said today, "This is \$22,329,000 more than the communities received from HUD for these programs in Fiscal Year 1999."

In addition, communities in New Jersey will receive millions of dollars in HUD funds from other programs, including renewals of rental assistance subsidies.

The increased HUD assistance will bring an estimated 1,763 new rental assistance vouchers to New Jersey and create an estimated 543 additional new jobs during the year, and help an estimated additional 1,722 homeless people get housing and move toward self-sufficiency.

The HUD assistance is contained in the Department's Fiscal Year 2000 budget, which was recently signed into law by President Clinton. HUD will use the budget to expand and preserve the supply of affordable housing, benefit senior citizens, create jobs, and help revitalize communities.

"This is the best HUD budget of the Clinton Administration," Cuomo said. "The budget is a direct result of President Clinton's strong and effective advocacy of HUD programs, his willingness to veto any budget that failed to provide adequate funding, and his work with Congress."

"This budget benefits our nation by putting HUD back in the business of creating and

preserving desperately needed affordable housing, jobs, and economic development for America's people and places in greatest need," Cuomo added. The budget is also a vote of confidence in the performance of the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the management reforms we've successfully implemented."

The budget provides \$1.5 billion more for HUD programs than the Department received in Fiscal Year 1999.

The new HUD budget includes: 60,000 new rental assistance vouchers - the largest expansion of affordable housing in seven years - along with increased funding for public housing, and a new initiative to protect residents of subsidized housing opting out of the Section 8 program.

• A Housing Security Plan for older Americans that will enable HUD to develop a broad range of housing options to meet the changing housing needs of senior citizens.

• Major job creation and economic revitalization initiatives that include the new America's Private Investment Companies (APIC) initiative, a second round of new Urban and Rural Empowerment Zones, and redevelopment of formerly polluted public housing and industrial sites known as brownfields.

• Increased funding for public housing authorities, homeless assistance and prevention program, and the fight against housing discrimination.

• A provision making HUD's Community Builders a permanent part of the Department.

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Turnpike Authority, workers reach agreement

TRENTON (AP) — The New Jersey Turnpike Authority and its largest union reached a tentative contract agreement, avoiding the hostile negotiations that dominated their last contract talks.

The authority said in a statement released last week that it granted the union's 1,127 toll collectors, maintenance workers and clerical and technical employees a 14.5 percent raise over four years. The proposed contract also apparently tries to limit employee benefits labeled "excessive" in a report from the State Commission of Investigation of municipal governments, state agencies, community colleges and local school boards.

Turnpike Authority spokeswoman Regina Adams would not elaborate on the details. In December 1998, the report revealed that Turnpike employees received eight weeks' vacation, could convert sick and vacation leave into cash and qualified for automatic longevity raises of 7 percent above contractual raises. The contract is expected to be ratified by the end of November.

The Turnpike Authority is negotiating contracts with three other unions.

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Project Coordinator, City of Plainfield (908) 753-3377.

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CityLife

Jersey City's inner-city renewal plan gets a boost from strategic partnership



The upcoming Bergen Station South postal facility in Jersey City's MLK HUB redevelopment area, which promises to become a vibrant commercial and retail center. A joint venture partnership involving the Martin Luther King Neighborhood Development Corp., the Jersey City Economic Development Corp. is making it happen throughout the area. The city has committed \$16 million to redevelop this retail district, the centerpiece of which includes a sprawling, state-of-the-art shopping center.

JERSEY CITY — Jersey City's extensive waterfront development meshes with a strategy of bringing capital investment into the inner city, says Stuart Koperwice, president of the Jersey City Economic Development Corp. (EDC), the nonprofit agency signed by the city to manage all Urban Enterprise Zone business.

"The whole thrust is to utilize the investments being made on the waterfront so all the residents can benefit." The Society Hill development along the Hackensack River is overshadowed by development to the east, overlooking Manhattan and the Hudson. "New York City is the best skyline in the world, and obviously Jersey City has the world's best view," Koperwice said. "It's more than a view, this is a great place to live and work."

Through the heart of the inner city runs Dr. Martin Luther King Drive, the former Jackson Avenue that was intensely pleasant in its heyday, as was Newark's Springfield Avenue. Now largely decayed and downtrodden, both are like other Dr. King roads that crisscross the nation.

"These blighted thoroughfares really aren't a tribute to Dr. King," says Omar Barbour, who owned the Salton Hardware and Home Center in the area. "We still remembered when this was the place to be," and each weekend folks would get dressed and simply stroll along Jackson Avenue and share stories of births, deaths and marriages.

But Barbour and others in the black community spearheaded a movement toward renewal, mounting a drive to restore the renamed avenue — now Martin Luther King Drive — and the 26 blocks that straddle it. They set out to "make it a tribute to one of our heroes," said Barbour, now co-director of the MLK Neighborhood Development Corp.

The change took many years of struggle. An award-winning redevelopment plan (the American Planning Association's Paul Davidoff Award for community advocacy in 1995 and HUD Best Practices ribbon) took shape over five years of community forums and consultant reports.

But it paid off, with a project now considered critical not only to Jersey City, but for the entire Northeast urban corridor. The 6-block core of the area known as the HUB (for Holistic Urban Building) is the linchpin of the plan, with a 50,000 square-foot supermarket opening next month and an 8,000 square-foot Ponderosa steakhouse to open in January, for a total of 220 new permanent jobs. A dozen other stores include national names that have signed leases, for a total of 83,000 square feet of new commercial space.

A new 20,000 square-foot post office, a firehouse, and new 1- to 4-family townhouses fair market prices will follow.

With change, very often, comes trepidation. Just as people used to ask "Why build a complex in the middle of Newark's urban blight," there is always the risk that no matter how well you build it, "they won't come."

But Barbour and his allies — residents, business people, community leaders and many others — never wavered from the plan. "You need an engine, to bring back traffic and create a synergy. If this doesn't all get

Civil Rights has given way to "Silver Rights," says Barbour, 'which is getting the money. This helps society as whole: taxpayers, senior citizens, for everybody.'

—Omar Barbour

Co-director MLK Neighborhood Development Corp.

commercial development, we'll just develop more housing."

The residents in the primary retail trade zone already have \$200 million

in disposal income per year but only recapture 5 cents of every dollar, he noted. "So you have a blighted area. We told some of the residents who complained about drugs in the area that the reason for the underground economy is that you don't have a vibrant over-ground economy. You need that bottom, like the drummer in a jazz band. Well, the bottom fell out of a lot of urban communities (with the elimination of manufacturing and other industry) and the drug trade took over for those lost jobs."

"You've got to create stakeholders, too, so you can create more care and concern from people who have a vested interest. The great social programs of old — model cities and urban renewal — missed one critical key, he said. "Creating a sense of ownership in people who are affected by the policies and plans. Provide people with a stake, and you have longevity."

Fortunately for this inner city area, Civil Rights has given way to "Silver Rights," says Barbour, "which is getting the money. This helps society as whole: taxpayers, senior citizens, for everybody."

Barbour's home center, like many people's properties, was bulldozed for the redevelopment. "But it was true eminent domain, for the greater public good."

In shopping strips all over the city, "blockfront" projects are renewing the storefronts to make them more attractive for consumers and investors. National tenants moving in or considering in Foodlocker, Starbucks and Blockbuster Video.

Around Journal Square, a PATH system hub linking Manhattan to Newark, contractors are completing \$7.5 million in new streetscape over a 15-block area with support from the 3-year-old Journal Square Restoration Corp., funded by special improvement district assessments and Urban Enterprise Zone funds.

A new light-rail station, where 90-foot trains will stop on their way from Bayonne to the Turnpike, should open in the spring. This people mover will bring people from northern and southern districts to the main waterfront. In 5 years, waterfront investment has brought 22,000 jobs, many from New York, and small business startups have doubled. Major firms need services, from catering to computer consulting, and about 10 percent of new jobs go to city residents, Koperwice said.

With the influx of firms like Wall Street's Lord Abbots jumping on the bandwagon (they're moving some 300 employees to town) comes a huge influx of housing dollars. Rents are not yet stratospheric like Hoboken's but certainly robust. Still, 2-bedrooms are in the \$2,000 range, compared to \$3,500 in Manhattan.



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Business/Evening Attire

HeartBeat

Health Calendar

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for people who have Scleroderma 7 p.m. (732) 937-8520

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital offers a course in Hypothyroidism Call (732) 937-8520 for information

TEANECK — Holy Name Hospital School of Nursing hosts an open house for new nurses 3:30 p.m. (201) 833-3186

GLEN RIDGE — Lung Diagnostics hosts a seminar and workshop for smokers who want to quit at the Medical Professional Building at Mountainside Hospital 7:30 p.m. (973) 509-0047

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for caregivers of young onset Parkinson's disease patients 7 p.m. (732) 745-7520

JERSEY CITY — Jersey City Medical Center hosts a support group meeting for breast cancer survivors 6 p.m. (201) 915-2273

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for women with breastfeeding 12:15 p.m. (732) 937-8105

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for people living with cancer 7 p.m. (732) 937-7557

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

PLAINFIELD — Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center hosts a support group meeting for people diagnosed with osteoporosis 10 a.m. (908) 858-2385

PLAINFIELD — Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center hosts a support group meeting for men with prostate cancer 7 p.m. (908) 858-2385

PLAINFIELD — Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center hosts a support group meeting for people living with HIV 7 p.m. (908) 858-2385

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for caregivers of Parkinson's disease patients 12 p.m. (732) 745-7520

NEW BRUNSWICK — St. Peter's University Hospital hosts a seminar on coping with stress during the holidays 6:30 a.m. (732) 937-6051

PLAINFIELD — Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center hosts a support group meeting for people living with HIV 7 p.m. (908) 858-2385

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital offers a cooking class for a healthy heart 1:30 p.m. (732) 937-8520

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for people suffering from manic depression 7:30 p.m. (732) 937-8520

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for families dealing with depression 7:30 p.m. (732) 937-8520

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

JAMESBURG — The Greater New Jersey Chapter of the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation hosts an art program for children and adolescents with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis at the Congregation B'nai B'rith in Short Hills 1 p.m. (732) 656-1244

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for people who overeat 10 a.m. (732) 937-8520

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for families dealing with depression 7:30 p.m. (732) 937-8520

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a tour through the hospital's maternity ward and nursery 3:30 p.m. (732) 937-8520

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital hosts a support group for men with prostate cancer 7 p.m. (732) 937-8520

NEW BRUNSWICK — St. Peter's University Hospital hosts a support group meeting for men with prostate cancer at the Cancer Institute 7 p.m. (732) 745-6692

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

NEW BRUNSWICK — Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital offers a course in childbirth preparation 7:15 p.m. (732) 937-8520

PLAINFIELD — Muhlenberg Regional Medical Center offers free blood pressure screenings 4 p.m. (908) 858-2385

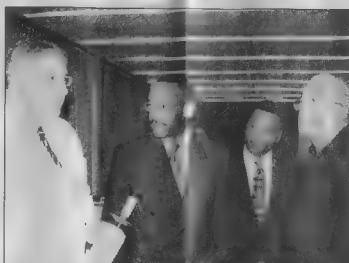
State legislators host discussion about children and asthma

NEWARK — State legislators, local health officials and health care professionals recently participated in a round table discussion about childhood asthma held at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMDNJ) in Newark.

The purpose of the event, sponsored by State Assembly members LeRoy J. Jones, Jr. (D-27th) and Craig A. Stanley (D-28th), was to examine the childhood asthma and the resources that schools have to help these children particularly if they are experiencing a serious problem.

Dr. Leonard Bielory, director of the Asthma Research Center at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School provided background about the health needs of children with asthma and demonstrated some of the latest approaches for treating this chronic and debilitating disease.

Also joining the discussion were Catherine Cuomo Cecere, director of the Newark Department of Health and Human Services; Bruce Foster, director of the East Orange Department of Health and Human Services; and Dorothy Greshy, a nurse at the Franklin Street School in Newark. In discussing why he is interested in addressing the needs of asthmatic children, Assemblyman Stanley said, "Essex County has the highest incidence of asthma in



Dr. Leonard Bielory (left), director of the Asthma Research Center at UMDNJ-New Jersey Medical School, talks about research related to childhood asthma with (from left), Assemblymen LeRoy Jones, Craig Stanley and William Payne.

the New Jersey and leads the state in the number of deaths related to asthma. This is a major public health problem and we need to find solutions."

Assemblyman Jones emphasized the need for health care professionals, elected and public officials, and school administrators to develop an initiative that responds to the needs of children with asthma and their families. "This initiative should have two components

One would support research efforts to find more effective treatment for asthma and the other would provide education and training to school health staff so that they are better equipped in care for these children during the school day."

He said that based on the information generated by the round table discussion, he will be drafting a series of legislative bills that provide the funding necessary to implement the initiative.

Robert Wood Johnson Hospital and Aetna HMO part ways

By Derrick Heary

NEW BRUNSWICK (AP) — One of the nation's leading academic health care centers says it can't afford to do business with New Jersey's largest HMO.

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital recently said it will let its five-year contract with Aetna U.S. Healthcare expire Dec. 1. Hospital officials said they can't afford the reduced reimbursements that Aetna had proposed over the last two months.

Aetna's offer had an overall 30 percent cut, or \$15 million, Harvey A. Holberg, president and CEO of Robert Wood Johnson, said at a news conference.

"Their offer was actually far worse than what they said verbally," said Ann Noble, Robert Wood Johnson vice president of finance. "It became evident to me that we weren't getting any where."

Noble said the decision was made last week to let the contract expire. "It happened very quickly," Noble said. "In the last week, it really fell apart."

Aetna officials in a prepared statement said they would keep trying to negotiate a contract before Dec. 1. If Robert Wood Johnson lets the contract expire, it would only affect participating physicians and services minimally, the company said.

Aetna is the largest of the 18 HMOs operating in New Jersey. Aetna has 574,249 members in the Garden State according to third quarter data released in August by the New Jersey Department of Banking and Investment. That gave Aetna a 37.8 percent market share. And Aetna represents about 15 percent of patients seeking care at the hospital, Holberg said. Between 4,000

and 5,000 admissions to the hospital are through Aetna each year, officials said. That share rivals other HMOs in New Jersey.

The hospital is the only one in the region that offers open heart surgery. It also is one of five hospitals in the state licensed to perform kidney transplants and one of two consent to perform heart transplants.

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NAACP's fight to stop HIV/AIDS is head strong

WASHINGTON — The NAACP's strong commitment to eliminating the worldwide HIV/AIDS health epidemic begins at the national level and extends to its 2,200 branches on the grassroots level. In 1992, the NAACP declared HIV/AIDS a public health crisis, calling for a state of emergency in the black community. Since then, NAACP branches have participated in education and awareness training, screenings, and advocacy work nationwide. The Association has distributed over 250,000 HIV/AIDS education brochures targeting black adolescents. For six years, the Houston, Texas NAACP branch has operated an HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention program by providing group presentations, seminars, printed media and a minority speaker's bureau to local residents. In another instance, the Kentucky State Women in the NAACP designated HIV/AIDS as their primary health focus and conducted health fairs for disadvantaged communities.

AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is the late stage illness triggered by infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). According to the official definition published by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in 1985, a person is diagnosed with AIDS when he or she has a CD4 helper T-cell count of less than 200 cells/mm³ and/or certain opportunistic infections common with advanced immune deficiency. Whereas healthy adults usually have CD4 cell counts at or greater than 1,000 cells/mm³, HIV weakens the body's ability to fight disease, and as a result, patients suffer from a number of disorders and infections. These include bacterial and mycobacterial infections, fungal infections, malignancies, protozoal infections, viral infections, neurological conditions, depression, wasting and other complications.

HIV/AIDS in the United States

• There are currently 688,200

reported HIV/AIDS cases in the United States. 570,425 are cases in adult and adolescent males.

• 109,311 are cases in adult and adolescent females

• 8,461 cases are in children under the age of 13

HIV/AIDS in the African American Community

• African Americans comprise 13 percent of the national population

• African Americans account for 45 percent of the 688,200 reported AIDS cases in the United States

• 40,000 African Americans were newly diagnosed with HIV in 1998

• African American children account for 69 percent of the 8,461 pediatric HIV/AIDS cases in the United States

• African American women account for more than half (57 percent) of the 109,311 AIDS cases among women in the United States

• AIDS is the second leading killer of African American women ages 25-44

• AIDS is the leading killer of African American men ages 25-44

HIV/AIDS Around the World

• There will be an estimated 40 million people infected with HIV worldwide by the year 2000

• Current regional statistics for HIV/AIDS show there are 10.2 million cases in Africa and the Middle East

• 2.7 million cases in East and Southeast Asia, and the Pacific

• 3.1 million cases in Latin America and the Caribbean

• 69,000 cases in North America

• 80,000 cases in Western Europe

• 70,000 cases in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

• 12,000 cases in Australia and New Zealand

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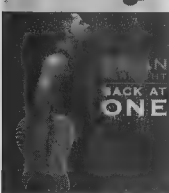
NJ KidCare is a program of the
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Chair: Whitman, Governor

ARTS & WEENESDAY

City News 84

November 17 — November 23, 1999

Music Reviews



Brian McKnight Back At One (Motown Records)

Some things never change, but sometimes that can be a good thing.

Brian McKnight makes true this statement on his latest album, *Back At One* (Motown Records).

He delivers another romantically inspired collection of ballads through musically diverse song like "Back At One," and "Stay."

He also adds some uptempo flavor in the hip-hop laced "Stay or Let It Go," produced by Rodney Jerkins, whose made his mark with "The Boy Is Mine" music track.



Various Artists VH1 Duos Live '99 (Arista Records)

This VH1 collage of chart-topping vocalists provides an array of musical styles of both classic and revisited hits since the start of music.

The CD is highlighted with the Whitney Houston/Mary J. Blige duet of Aretha Franklin's "Ain't No Way," in which both Houston and Blige sound distinctly better than they have in years.

Other standouts on the album include the "I'm Every Woman (Reprise)," in which Houston, Chaka Khan, Faith Hill, Brandy, LeAnn Rimes, and Blige join together to finish the concert, and the performance of "Proud Mary" by Tina Turner, Sir Elton John, and Cher.



The Greatest Romance Ever Sold (Arista Records)

The Artist Formerly Known as Prince is on his way back to the top of the charts as evidenced by the release of his first single, "The Great New Artist Revealed" off the new CD to be released album, "Rave Un2 The Joy Fantastic."

This hip-hop edged song has an uptempo beat adorned with the additional guitar and piano styled melodies TAPAK is known for. Also adding to the single's flavor is Ruff Ryders' First Lady, Eve.

To Aspiring Poets

The City News Arts Wednesday section is seeking unpublished poets to submit their work for exposure in a upcoming section featuring new artists.

Rome returns to music scene with new album, label

By Robert E. Williams III
Staff Writer

R&B singer Rome has a lot to be thankful for.

And it is the recognition of that that the singer has appropriately named his album "Rome 2000 - Thank You."

One of the things Rome can be thankful for is the rising success he has enjoyed since he parted ways with RCA Records last year, which distributed his 1997 debut album that included his most successful sample "Belong To You" (it sold five hundred thousand copies in ten weeks).

His success can not be measured yet in the sales of his album, which is scheduled to be released November 23, on his record label JTTJ Records. The short time he took to rebound from being released from a major record label, is something that would have taken other artists some years to do.

"I believe God has a way of doing things that they (record companies) do not do," said Rome, a.k.a. Jerome Woods from Benton Harbor, Mich.

And Rome's belief in God has guided him through his career and his whole life.

"As a child I began to learn who God was," and Rome "I pray before I write a song that how I get a song."

Rome said his first album dealt with love, especially from the point of meeting someone for the first time. It also delved into the aspect of two people being there for each other in order to enhance their relationship.

His second album deals with love past that stage, with songs



Rome

Courtesy of Double Xposure Publicity

like "Don't Give Up," an inspirational selection that talks about not losing hope, to "Thank You" giving gratitude to all those who helped him get to where he is now.

The album stands as a reflection of the emotions he explored during the rocky times and

happy times in his career.

"What affects my music is what is going on today, what is going on in my life. I like my songs to tell a story," Rome said.

"Most of my music is driven from the soul."

Although Rome did not go into specific detail, in 1998 he

broke away from RCA in order to have more of an input into the creation and production of his music. His production company has developed into an enterprise that is an umbrella for his record label, production company, and music publishing company.

But before he was able to move forward, many people in the industry did not believe the story until RCA announced it in Billboard Magazine. After that, he met Mark Gordon, president of Ground Level Distribution, who agreed to distribute his label on an album to album contract basis.

JTTJ Records was named for his three children, Jerome Elliott, 10, and twins Tanus Joshua and Jasmine Candace, 7. Rome also has a "very special lady" who is the mother of his children and who has "been with him from day one."

Now wearing two hats as CEO and recording artist, Rome finds his experience with his company less complex than his time working with RCA.

"I don't have to go through the red tape," Rome said.

Some of those who helped him with the album included producers Nate Wood, Al McKnight, Robert Palmer and Andre Egoz.

The album also features a duet with Keshia Hayne-Broussard, an up and coming artists signed to his label after she sang "The Greatest Love of All" for him in a meeting in Dallas, Texas. The two recorded a remake of the Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell hit "Heaven Must Have Sent You Precious Love."

"She sounds just like Tammi Terrell," Rome said.

Choreographer Fatima Robinson to teach through new home video

Did you ever want to learn how to dance like Aaliyah or Missy Elliott?

Your chance is about to come in the form of the new dance instructional video, "Go Fatima," in which renowned choreographer Fatima Robinson will teach viewers the dance moves from such videos like Aaliyah's "Are You That Somebody" and the Backstreet Boys' "Everybody (Backstreet's Back)."

Robinson will teach her choreography step-by-step using segments and edited video from the original footage.

Robinson has choreographed dances other artists like Will Smith ("Wild West") and Busta Rhymes.

Chico DeBarge Takes Act on the Road

Chico DeBarge is gearing up for a national tour to promote his new album, "The Game," which features Joe, Bobby Brown, and brother El DeBarge. The tour, which will begin November 5 in New Orleans will make its way through the south and up the east coast throughout the

month. Here are the schedule dates: November 18 - Philadelphia; November 19 - Miami; November 20 - Detroit; November 21-22 - New York; November 24 - Cleveland; OH; November 26 - Pittsburgh; PA; November 27 Cleveland, OH.

D'Angelo's album delayed...again

Are you still waiting for D'Angelo's album to drop this month as scheduled?

Well, once again his much anticipated album "Voodoo" is now scheduled to hit the shelves in January along with Erykah Badu and Lauryn Hill.

The album, which was originally supposed to debut in April 1998, will be a follow up to his much acclaimed debut "Brown Sugar," and features such as artists as Redman and Method Man.

More dates added to TLC tour

Despite reported troubles within the group, TLC added more dates to their North America tour promoting their latest album "Fan Mail." The tour, which currently features opening acts Ideal, Destiny's Child, and Christina Aguilera, will make its way through the nation and the area at Madison Square Garden in New York January 23.

and the First Union Center in Philadelphia. Here is a list of upcoming dates: January 9 - San Diego, CA (Sports Arena); January 5 - Oakland, CA (Coliseum); January 7 - Las Vegas, NV (Mandalay Bay); January 9 - Los Angeles, CA (Arrowhead Pond); January 10 - Seattle, WA (Key Arena); January 14 - Chicago, IL (Allstate Arena); January 16 - Detroit, MI (Palace of Auburn Hills); January 18 - Cleveland, OH (CSU Convocation Center); January 20 - Boston, MA (Fleet Center); January 21 - New York, NY (Madison Square Garden); January 23 - Washington D.C. (MCI Center); January 25 - Philadelphia, PA (First Union Center); January 27 - Fort Lauderdale (National Care Center); January 29 - Atlanta, GA (Phillips Arena).

TLC, Houston, and Marley make RIAA's "Artists of the Century" list

Recording Industry Association of America recently announced its "Artists of the Century" list, naming Whitney Houston the top R&B female artist, Boyz II Men the top R&B group, and TLC's "CrazySexyCool" album the leading hip-hop album, which sold over ten million albums. Bob Marley and the Wailers' "Legend" ranked as the top reggae set.

The Beatles were honored as the best-selling group of the century, who sold more than 106 million albums in the United States. The Eagles' "The Greatest Hits 1971-1975" was the century's highest selling album with 26 million units sold, a record held by Michael Jackson's "Thriller," which held the record from

Photo courtesy of Arista Records
Whitney Houston

1984 until last January. Gary Brooks was the top selling male artists with 89 million units sold, and Barbra Streisand tallied 82 million albums as the top female artists.

The top single was "Candle In The Wind 1997" by Sir Elton John, his tribute to the late Princess Diana of Wales who died August 30 of that year.

Elvis Presley was the century's performer with the most gold and platinum albums and singles. Besides his group, Rickey has also been busy for the last two years with his youth jazz project, which links aspiring jazz artists with professional musicians. This project is sponsored by a Union County Heart Grant from the Freeholders.

In Your Ear

By Robert E. Williams III

TLC disputes are signs of solo resolution

Did you ever think with all the turmoil that has afflicted TLC that they were not meant to be around a long time?

Right after TLC overcame their last age of trouble by quelling rumors that was the group's last album, *Next* (Last Eye) Lopes had added fuel to the fire again.

The group was in its first headlining tour in North America with opening acts like Christina Aguilera, Jazzeed Edge, and Destiny's Child for its latest album "Fan Mail." Being that the group is at the pinnacle of its success with a multi-platinum album and the group's breaking single "No Scrubs," you would think things would trudge. But low and behold, fate has stepped in the familiar—steering TLC down the same path as the Supremes, Jode, and other female groups who fell to constant agitation among its members.

According to Entertainment Weekly, the group has been in turmoil over the behavior of Lopes, who has not been showing up to interviews and photo shoots to promote its new tour. Up to the group has been the excuse that she was sick. But now, "Thelma" "Thelma" Watkins and Rozonda "Chilli" Bousquet voiced their opinions about the who situation.

"She was not sick," said Watkins in a previous interview.

"She was at the hotel, upset (with us)," Thomas added.

And even though Lopes was not sick, it could be argued that observers are from day one the group has not enjoyed the complete success of their music. Everytime an album was released by the group, there was some trouble to accompany it.

Remember at the tail end of the "Ohh On the TLC Trip" album when Lopes burned former Atlanta Falcon Andre Rison's house? Or when "Waterfalls" off the "CrazySexyCool" album was one of the biggest angles and the group was in bankruptcy? Or what about at the start of this album earlier this year TLC gave an interview to *Vibe* Magazine, and after the three women finished the interview, Lopes called the reporter and told him that she could not stand behind the TLC project "100 percent" and that she wouldn't say anything further and she was into her solo project.

If anything can be said for this group, as much talent that they possess for a female trio in musical collaboration that usually works better when the members add distinctly different things to the overall sound they are probably better apart.

Watkins has been the beginnings of a successful solo career with guest spots on various singles by other artists most notably the "Da Brat" single "This Love" and the making of a song something akin to Jewel's book of poetry. She is also currently working on an animation project and a production company.

Lopes has already made her path, guest spotting on various hip-hop collages, including the "Not Tonight" remix by Lil' Kim featuring Hot 97 radio disc jockey Angie Martinez, De Brat, and Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott. Method Man's last album, and labelmate Donal Jones' say "What U Know What's Up?" She has also started her own management company, which has just boosted the career of the BLAQUE (Believing in Life and a Quest for Love) in the group's last album. This group is talent in the making, so don't believe the hype.

Thomas has not embarked on a career path as aggressively as her others, but with the birth of her son Tron, whose father is the group's producer Dallas Austin (who co-wrote "Waterfalls"), she would probably take the opportunity to spend more time with her family as she would (rightly so) be fed up with the industry. It would not be surprising if she did not return to music with the exception of a TLC reunion (which would probably be short-lived) or the group's induction into the Music Hall of Fame. Whatever they do or do not do, it will be within the next two years. And if this group truly loves each other, the best thing for them to do is to look at this as a stepping stone to their solo success (public or private) and go their separate ways.

Rickey Joyce to perform Rahway concert

After dazzling audiences all over the country with his unassuming and pioneering percussion style, jazz percussionist Rickey Joyce will return to his Union County roots with a concert starring his group, The Rickey Joyce Group, November 19, as part of the "Jazz

'99 Concert Series" organized by The Arts Guild/Rahway on Irving Street. Playing in movies and New York clubs, Joyce has enjoyed a successful career that spans 25 years. He gained notoriety as the leader of his group Jazz Band in 1977, and has

performed with Larry Young, Donald Byrd, Sun Ra, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Ronny Belle, and The Platters. His current band performs a mix of jazz, contemporary, Latin music, funk and R&B with standards similar to Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Theolonius Monk.



Photo courtesy of Rickey Joyce
Drummer Rickey Joyce

Billboard

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

NEW YORK — The Orion Gallery presents the paintings of artist Michael Ryan. 6 p.m. (212) 966-2977.

NEW YORK — The Blue Note Jazz Club presents Roberta Flack through Nov. 21. 9 p.m. (212) 475-8592.

NEW YORK — The Morganthal-Fredrick Gallery presents the work of photographer Natsumi Ohnuma. Call (212) 225-5577 for information.

NEW BRUNSWICK — The Crossroads Theater presents the musical "Play On." 8 p.m. (973) 593-0189.

NEW YORK — The Studio Museum in Harlem presents an exhibit of contemporary art in transition. Call (212) 864-4500 for information.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

NEWARK — Newark Symphony Hall presents the gospel play "A Good Man Is Hard To Find: Part II" through Nov. 21. 7:30 p.m. (973) 643-8009.

NEW BRUNSWICK — The State Theater presents Laila Tormin. 8 p.m. (732) 246-7459.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19

NEWARK — The African Globe Theater presents August Wilson's "Fences" at Newark's Symphony Hall African Globe Theater through November 21. 8 p.m. (973) 542-1564.

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents All-State Jazz Concert. 7 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents legendary saxophone player Sonny Rollins. 8 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

ELIZABETH — Odyssey International Productions presents exciting look at the world of fashion in "Have Faith in Fashion Pt. I" at the Wyndham Garden Hotel. 8 p.m. (908) 474-1255.

NEWARK — The National Association of Composers and Songwriters presents "Celebrations: A Reunion Gala Dance." The dance celebrates the pride of third generation Hispanics at Newark's Symphony Hall. 8 p.m. (973) 485-5441.

MORRISTOWN — The Folk Project presents Beverly Smith and the Rhythm Method String Band at the Morris County Cultural Center. Call (973) 636-5569 for information.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22

NEW YORK — The Blue Note Jazz Club presents the Ray Vega Latin Trio. Part of the Latin Nights at the Blue Note. 8 p.m. (212) 475-8592.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

NEW YORK — The Blue Note Jazz Club presents McCoy Tyner. Free jazz special guests Chico Freeman through Nov. 28. 9 p.m. (212) 475-8592.

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents Grammy award artist Sting. 7:30 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents the New York Philharmonic. 8 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

NEWARK — The African Globe Theater presents August Wilson's "Fences" at Newark's Symphony Hall African Globe Theater through November 28. 8 p.m. (973) 542-1564.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27

NEW BRUNSWICK — 6th Annual Gospel Showcase at the State Theater. Featuring Gospel Choir Dottie Peoples and Nancy Jackson, and Rutgers Liberated Gospel Choir. 8 p.m. (732) 422-5874 for information. (732) 636-7444 for tickets.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents opera singer Danyca Graves. 3 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29

NEW YORK — The Blue Note Jazz Club presents Marc Cary & His Band. 9 p.m. (212) 475-8592.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

NEW YORK — The Blue Note Jazz Club presents Max Roach & The 52 Way Bass Five through Dec. 5. 9 p.m. (212) 475-8592.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra's American Repertory Ballet production of Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker." 7 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

NEWARK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents the Philharmonic Orchestra of New Jersey performing Handel's "Messiah." 7:30 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3

NEW YORK — The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC) presents legendary pianist Emanuel Ax. 8 p.m. (973) 636-5569 for information.

Malcolm D. Lee talks about motivation behind "The Best Man"

By Les Hubbard

(NNPA) — Being the cousin of a well-known filmmaker can be difficult when you're just starting in the movie industry. But, if you're Malcolm Lee and your cousin is Spike Lee, it can be unbearable.

"When I was in film school I tried to put that on the back of my mind because people will make certain assumptions about you," said Malcolm in a recent interview in San Francisco. "They will have certain expectations about you [and your work] and I can only be the filmmaker that I can be."

While the expectations were high for the 29-year-old neophyte, he has met and exceeded them all. His film, "The Best Man," debuted on Oct. 22 at number one in theaters across the country. It was the first major film for the Georgetown University and New York University film school graduate. And although his influential cousin produced it, making it wasn't easy. In fact, Malcolm said that if Universal Pictures hadn't jumped at his screenplay, his film career could've possibly been over.

"The Best Man" was my sixth screenplay and I pretty much said to myself that if this screenplay didn't go, I was going to be pretty much done," he said.

Fortunately for him, his career was not done. Set in New York City, "The Best Man" stars Taye Diggs, Nia Long, Morris Chestnut and Terrence Howard. It centers around Harper Stewart (Diggs),



Photo by Michael Ginsburg

Taye Diggs and Sanaa Lathan get close in a scene from Malcolm D. Lee's "The Best Man."

an up and coming writer who flies to New York to be the best man at Lance's (Chestnut) wedding.

Lance, a professional football player, is marrying his college sweetheart Mia (Mónica Calhoun).

Harper has just completed a fictional novel, "Unfinished Business," about his college years. There is some damaging information in the novel regarding the bride and groom that Harper doesn't expect to be released until after the wedding. But, Jordan (Long), a television producer and Harper's former love interest, gets

an advance copy of the book. That copy makes its way around Harper's circle of friends and lands into the groom's hands, complicating the story.

"The Best Man" shows a collection of attractive, highly educated Black people, who are both successful and down to earth. All the characters are strong, beautiful and have drive," said Diggs. "They are not your run-of-the-mill stereotypes as far as Africans Americans are concerned." This is not a special group of people," said Malcolm. "I mean it is special and unique that

this is a rare look into this Black world in film, but this is so very normal where I come from."

A native of the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York, Malcolm was constantly surrounded by Black professionals, and he wanted to make a film to show this.

"The film is not based on any real life experience," he said. "It is based on me not seeing people I can relate to on the big screen."

Malcolm said his primary motivation for making "The Best Man" was "Waiting to Exhale," the blockbuster movie based on

Terry McMillan's best-selling book. He said there were a lot of negative stereotypes about Black men in "Exhale." He pointed to the gay husband, the man who leaves his wife on New Year's Eve for his White secretary, the men who can't perform well in bed, and the absentee fathers. He said he wanted to show positive images in "The Best Man."

"That was her experience and her story. I don't blame her for that," he said. "I had to make something of a response to that because those aren't the brothers I know."

Malcolm said he also received a lot of influences from films such as "The Big Chill," "Diner," "My Best Friend's Wedding" and "Four Weddings and a Funeral" which made him focus on friendship and marriage, issues rarely dealt with by a Black cast.

"In a wedding all kinds of things still take place," he said. "There is a lot of dramatic, comedic and sexual tension at a wedding and I wanted to explore this with a Black cast."

It seems that Malcolm's need to balance the images and experiences captured on the big screen has paid off. The movie debuted at number one. Since then, it has been the topic of discussion on radio and TV shows, and on Internet Chat lines. If the reception of this film is any indication of his future in the movie business, Malcolm Lee will have a long and prosperous career just like his cousin, Spike.

Black writers, poets honored at national writers conference

By Sarah Smith Duckworth

The Gwendolyn Brooks Center at Chicago State University hosted the Ninth Annual Gwendolyn Brooks Writers Conference on Black Literature and Creative Writing from October 21-23.

A mixed audience of approximately 500 writers, scholars, and students from across the nation convened to celebrate Brooks, 83, on hand throughout the conference, speaking in a plenary session and

reading from her collection of poetry. Although Brooks, the first Black poet to receive a Pulitzer Prize in the United States, was the focus of the event, the conference was actually facilitated and managed by her protégé Haki Madhubuti, a preeminent poet and editor in his own right. The conference brought together an array of writers such as Sonia Sanchez, Quincy Troupe, Eugene Redmond, Nikki Giovanni, Marjorie Evans, Edwidge Danticat, and Attallah Shabazz, who served on panels and gave individual presentations. Publisher William Cox of Higher Issues in Education spoke on successful publishing for Black writers and journalists. Woodie King Jr., who received in 1996-1997 the Nobel



Photo courtesy of Chicago State Univ.

Gwendolyn Brooks Award for Sustained Achievement about with Jackie Taylor, actress and director of the Black Ensemble

Theater Company told Black writers of the trials and joys of writing for theater. Other prize winning poets and writers included Gwendolyn Mitchell, poet and editor for Third World Press, Fred Hord, author of several books of poems and president of the National Association for Black Cultural Center. Mwalabu Okantah, author and poet; Quraysh Ali Lansana, author, poet, and musician; and Sandra Jackson-Opoku, recipient of the American Library Association Award for her first novel, "The River Where Blood Is Born (1997). The centropolis of the conference was the Friday evening induction of Black writers into the National Literary Hall of Fame for Writers of African Descent. The special ceremony, paid tribute to 18 living writers and 12 ancestors. This year's awardees had their names symbolically inscribed in the Hall of Fame beside the names of last year's inductees - 15 living writers and 24 ancestors in a most impressive manner.

The highlight of the conference was the banquet performance of Maya Angelou on the last night of the conference. In a powerful and eloquent voice spanning a wide range of emotions, she recited eclectically poems written by a number of great Black poets and sung verses from spirituals and folk songs. The essence of her presentation was that love centers and uplifts human beings, connecting them to a Higher Power.

Poets debate over the term "spoken word"

In the midst of Newark Renaissance writers spanning the African Diaspora, the ongoing existence of "spoken word poetry" at the Spoken Word Festival held October 29-31 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.

The panel discussion, part of the three-day festival, featured such literary figures like Amin Baraka, Willie Sanchez, Sonia Sanchez and Lela Makala Asha Bandle. Joining as Care Moore, Reg E. Gaines, Roger Robinson, Sarah Jones, and Ras Baraka, who discussed spoken word poetry (the artistic discipline combining the reading of poetry with performance) and the growing commercialization of it.

Some of the panel members who voiced frustration identified themselves as poets and did not consider themselves spoken word

artists. "The difference is between who owns the voice and who controls the terms. We, as poets, never called poetry spoken word. MTV is responsible for that. We resisted that term. We didn't create it. The power structure that I don't control, gave it a name," said Asha Bandle, acclaimed columnist, poet and spoken word artist, and author of the acclaimed "The Prisoner's Wife: A Memoir."

"Spoken word reminds me of the debates and terms of Salas. Once the market incorporates all the terms under one heading, people begin thinking all is the same. The marketing term Salas has gone all around the world, but the history of Salas has not. Origins and creativity should never be lost," said Willie Sanchez, the series producer

of Images/Images, the award-winning and longest running Latino program on the PBS, the producer of the Emmy Award winning NJN Hispanic Youth Showcase.

Amin Baraka talked about the importance of control and power.

"In terms of poetry, in order to be fully human, you must change it to reflect yourself. The struggle for inclusion, in the struggle for democracy."

The panel discussion was one of many events that took place during the festival, which was organized by Baraka Seale, NJPAC representative. Each day of the event featured workshops for aspiring writers, poets, panel discussions, poetry readings and open mics, and performances by poets and spoken word artists.

Iyanla Vanzant's "In The Meantime" Tour leads us to some place beautiful

By Yolanda Young

(NNPA) — Iyanla Vanzant, the self-healing, spiritual guru and New York Times Best-selling author is currently on a national tour and is probably coming to a town near you. If you've got two or three hours and forty bucks to spare, she's well-worth checking out.

The show features a contemporary, gospel music and dance routine as a backdrop for her powerful wisdom. As the show opens, Iyanla sweeps out in a flowing white linen robe with pulse jumping beats from her number one selling gospel CD which totes the same name as her best selling book, "In The Meantime." The show is a sort of spiritual pep rally where about 3,000 women come together to cry, laugh, and heal. Brothers, you can come too, especially if you want meet some eligible women. Even if you, like me, don't believe in quick fixes or sage advice, once you know Iyanla's personal story you have to believe that there is something to what she has to say.

Iyanla grew up in New York City. Before she was out of her teens she endured the death of her mother from cancer, sexual molestation at the hands of a relative, quasi-homosexuality and teen pregnancy. Her early



Photo courtesy of Harmony

Iyanla Vanzant

20s weren't much better with the arrival of more children, a husband who physically abused her and a mountain of bills and disappointments. Some time during all this, Iyanla managed to flee from her marries spouse in the middle of the night, complete her bachelor's and law degrees and find spiritual truth in the Holy Bible and her Yoruba religion.

In her 30s, she left her job as a Philadelphia public defender and began writing her first book, "Tapping The Power Within." Around that time she risked being evicted from her

apartment and dealt with the knowledge that her teenage daughter was pregnant. I set down with Iyanla during her visit to Washington, D.C. and asked her how she managed to get through it all and end up where she is today. Millions of women read her eight best-selling books and follow her regular appearances on the "Oprah Winfrey Show" and the "Tom Joyner Morning Show."

In addition, she has a facility in Silver Spring, Maryland situated close to her palatial home. Her answer was simple: "I owe it all to God. I'm just an ordinary person doing extraordinary things. I understand and am trying to get others to see that only God matters. That's why I'm not signing books anymore. People are getting too into celebrity. I want people to see me as a real person. I go to the grocery store and if K-Mart has a sale, I'm there. My greatest desire is for people to know who they are from the inside out and to use that knowledge as a tool of empowerment and love."

Iyanla plans on doing a national tour once a year and spending the rest of her time writing and cooking for her husband. Her current tour runs through Thanksgiving, so look for her "In The Meantime" in a city close to you.

TOM HANKS **TIM ALLEN**

Disney • PIXAR

ONLY IN THEATRES NOVEMBER 24

Be prepared for next year's capital needs

By John Qua

If you foresee a financing need in 2000, it's not too early to begin looking for the right lender now. Raising capital is one of the biggest challenges for a growing business. Having the time to structure a flexible loan can improve the chance that your financing arrangement will ultimately achieve the goal you have in mind.

What Lenders Look For

Business owners need to think more like the lending institutions with which they are working. For example, too many business owners may manage down income to avoid a heavy tax burden, while a lender looks at net income and true profitability.

An understanding of what loan officers look for can help you put your business in the best possible shape to secure financing. While each lending institution has specific criteria that reflect its lending portfolio and experience, certain aspects of a business are of interest to most lenders.

•Years in business. Most lenders prefer to finance established companies in business for at least five years, with at least two or three years of profitable operations.

•Operating trends. The historical operating performance of a company is a key factor in any credit decision. Lenders look for stable, upward trends in revenues, earnings and cash flow. Dramatic increases, as well as deteriorating or erratic trends, may raise questions. If they prefer audited or reviewed financing statements with footnotes as opposed to tax returns. Balance sheet strength. Lenders look for strong equity. They will compare your company's assets-to-liabilities ratio and your profit levels to those of your competitors.

•Ability to repay. Lenders must feel confident that a borrower can service the proposed debt and maintain

business operations with current cash flow. For short-term loans, this is a top priority. Prepare a 5-year projection with balance sheets, income statements and cash flow statements for potential lenders.

•Collateral. Short-term loans typically are secured by accounts receivable and inventory, while longer term financing typically is secured by equipment or other long-term assets. The amount of credit extended compared to the value of the collateral varies with the transaction, the collateral type and the lender.

•Credit history. Significant weight is placed on the company's record in servicing its credit obligations. If your company is privately held, lenders will also review the personal credit histories of its principal owners. Check your business and personal credit reports now, correct any mistakes and resolve any outstanding problems. If you have no business credit history, build one: Borrow small amounts when your cash flow is positive and pay the money back before it's due.

•Operation and character. Lenders look for well-run companies with insurance and a good reputation in the market and community.

•Industry. Lenders can be adverse to lending to companies in certain industries. This may reflect negative past experiences, or it may be the result of regulatory pressures on banking institutions to maintain a diverse portfolio. In some cases, bank consolidation may change a bank's lending appetite. Non-bank commercial lenders may be more flexible.

•Revenue sources. Lenders like to know who your customers are and will want to see a customer backlog report showing locked-in customer contracts. If you have few clients or a heavy customer concentration, try to diversify your customer list or have a plan in place to do so.

•Y2K compliance.

Lenders today want their clients to have the software systems in place to deal with the Year 2000 computer problem. Make sure your computer system is Y2K compliant or that you have plans to assure timely compliance. Know how your own customers are dealing with this issue, if they aren't prepared. It could have a snowball effect on you.

Effective Presentation

Once you are ready to apply for a loan, the presentation you prepare for potential lenders is crucial. It should be formal, complete and clear. Begin with an effective executive summary to establish your goals and credentials and capture the interest of the lender.

Brochures and other marketing material will also help lenders understand your business better, and the better they understand your business, the better chance you'll have of having a loan approved. Begin working on corporate marketing materials now.

Look for the Right Lender

Just as a lender wants to be certain of lending to the right company, you want to borrow from the right lender. Start by inviting lenders to visit your facility and meet your key management team. Potential lenders can gain a better understanding of your financial needs during an onsite visit, and meeting your management team will let him or her know that you have a capable management team in place to run the business should the need ever arise.

In addition, this gives you a great opportunity to interview several lenders and compare the financing solutions they have to offer you. The lender you choose should be committed to your industry and have the flexibility to adapt its terms to your business's individual circumstances.

John Qua is Senior VP and Director of business financial services at Merrill Lynch.

It's smart to invest in yourself

(But first, do your homework)



Dale G. Caldwell

One of the best investments you can ever make is in yourself.

Instead of mutual funds or stocks, some people invest their savings in their own business.

The obvious disadvantage of investing in your own business is the risk involved. Most new businesses fail within the first three years. You therefore will risk losing everything that you now have if you should start your own business.

However, consider that the potential rewards are tremendous.

The quickest way to become a millionaire is to start your own business. Successful entrepreneurial ventures can generate annual rates of return of 200 percent or more instead of the roughly 20 percent you would receive from many traditional investments (i.e. mutual funds, stocks, bonds, and other financial vehicles.)

I believe that there are three most important tests of entrepreneurship. Every aspiring entrepreneur should be able to pass these three tests before actually starting a business. If they cannot pass these tests then they should reconsider taking the risks involved in starting a business.

Do you have the inclination?

The first test of entrepreneurship is determining whether or not you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur.

Contrary to popular belief, being an entrepreneur is much harder than working in a corporation.

Unlike most corporate employees, as a full-time entrepreneur:

- You will have to work 70 to 80 more hours a week and live under tremendous daily pressure
- You must become an expert in strategic planning, in management, in finance, in accounting, in marketing, in sales, and in human organizational behavior.

■ You will have to play the divergent roles of Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, manager of operations, salesperson and sometimes janitor, all at the same time. You must be able to live on very little income for three or more years.

If you will be comfortable doing these things then

you pass the first test of entrepreneurship.

Is your business plan smart?

The second test of entrepreneurship is developing a business plan that passes the scrutiny of your friends and advisors.

Too often people become entrepreneurs without a solid business plan. They are simply tired of working for someone else and want to be their own boss.

Unfortunately, their businesses usually fail because of poor planning. You must come up with an idea and put it in the form of a business plan. A business plan made up of a description of the product or service sold, an explanation of how it is going to be marketed and sold, a summary of the management team running the business, an explanation of where the business is going to be located and why, and five year financial projections.

The business plan should begin with a one-page executive summary summarizing the details of each section of the business plan.

As soon as you complete the business plan you should share it with friends and advisors (hopefully they will include bankers, consultants, accountants and lawyers) who will be honestly critical of your idea. Once you have put together a business plan that survives the scrutiny of friends and advisors you pass the second test of entrepreneurship.

Can you realize your dreams?

The third test of entrepreneurship is implementing your business plan. The world is full of people with great ideas. However, there are very few people who can take a vision and make it a reality.

To successfully implement your idea you must have patience, fortitude, guts, persistence, vision, people skills, energy, optimism and luck. If you possess all of these things then you pass the third test of entrepreneurship and have a good chance of succeeding.

If you don't possess all of these things then you may be better off working for a company and investing in mutual funds, stocks or bonds.

If you are thinking about starting your own business, put yourself through the three tests of entrepreneurship. These tests could make or save you a lot of money. Best of luck!

Con artists are too smart — you need to be a lot smarter

Any business activity using deceitful practices or devices to deprive another of property or other rights or cause economic injury is business fraud.

To avoid being a victim, you need to know the devices and the practices that are commonly used.

•Using a profitable business is hard enough without having to worry about getting ripped off. But it's a fact of life," says Robert Armstrong of Armstrong & Peters Ltd. Receivable Management Services. "There are always unsavory individuals who want to make quick money by cheating your business."

Nearly all businesses are susceptible to fraud because business has never been more competitive. "The more competition there is, the more you want to approve the big order or to get that new business. This eagerness makes it easier for a con artist to take advantage of you," Armstrong says.

Con artists know just what you will "hook" you. And they know countless ways to fool whatever systems you devise to stop them.

"You need to make it as hard as possible for a con artist to succeed. And the best way to keep a crook's hand out of your cookie jar is to learn his or her game," Armstrong says.

He offers several examples can help you recognize situations with a potential for fraud, so you can take a better look at the situation. Use them

to help you make more sound and safe business decisions.

Scams to watch out for

"Bustouts" or "Overbuys." These terms describe criminal activity that aims to acquire large quantities of merchandise without paying for it.

The swindler orders merchandise from several suppliers and pays promptly. These suppliers are then used as credit references for larger and larger orders. The bogus company soon becomes a slow-payer and then a non-payer. You, and probably several other businesses, are stuck.

"This type fraud is often well planned, highly organized and involves substantial financial backing," says Armstrong. "Unpaid-for merchandise is sold below cost to other illegitimate businesses, at flea-markets, or peddled door-to-door."

"Hit and Run." In this scam, the swindler moves into a location and orders merchandise on a cash-on-delivery basis. They pay with phony certified checks and/or cashier's checks. "By the time the counterfeit check bounces, the skip artist has moved on to a new location to repeat the scam," Armstrong says.

"The Hometown Repeater." Changing trade names and keeping his operation small, a "respectable citizen" swindler can avoid prosecution for an indefinite time.

Watch out these customers by any discrete means you can.

Beware of bogus 'Yellow-Pages' scams

WASHINGTON — That mail invoice bearing the familiar "walking fingers" logo and the name "Yellow Pages" could be a camouflaged invitation to lose money.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Yellow Pages Publishers Association (YPPA) caution businesses that unscrupulous promoters are soliciting advertising for online, alternative or nonexistent business directories. Although these appear to be legitimate Yellow Pages publications, they are not distributed to the public, posted on the Web, or promoted as promised. Thus, the directories

if they exist at all — offer no benefits to businesses that pay to advertise in them.

The solicitation to buy ad space may look like an invoice and bear the "walking fingers" logo and the Yellow Pages name. Neither the name nor the logo is protected by federal copyright or trademark registration. That's how fraudulent promoters are able to lead businesses to believe they are affiliated with local telephone directories distributed in a particular area.

By law, come-ons looking like invoices or bills must state: "THIS IS NOT A BILL."

Business Opportunities for Minority and/or Women-Owned Retail Business



Westfield Concession Management, Inc. is seeking minority and/or

women-owned retail businesses to own/operate retail concessions

within Newark Airport Terminal C. Any retail business entrepreneurs

may inquire, with a special emphasis on one of our targeted categories:

Regional Themed Gifts, Local Museum(s) Gift Store, Bath & Body,

Children's Gifts, and Apparel



For information on this opportunity contact:
Jack Skarka, Specialty Leasing Manager, Westfield
973-648-0600

Or fax information on your business concept
after 6 p.m. to Westfield Concession Management,
Inc. at 973-648-0505

In order to qualify, applicants must obtain certification as a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Qualified businesses can receive direct support from Westfield in the process of applying and obtaining DBE certification. A limited number of leases at Terminal C are available under this program.

Westfield
Westfield Concession Management, Inc.
Terminal C, Newark International Airport

CitySports

1999 Year of the Tiger

Tiger Woods recently became the first player since Ben Hogan in 1953 to win four consecutive U.S. tour events when he captured the Valderrama World Championship in Valderrama, Spain. The record for consecutive wins was set by Byron Nelson when he won 11 straight in 1945. In addition, Woods' victory earned the 23 year-old a \$1,000,000 check which brought his 1999 winnings to \$6,936,825. Woods, who is the world's top rated player, also sits atop the World PGA Tours money list (David Duval is second with \$3,641,506).

In so doing, Woods became the first player in PGA history to surpass the 6 million dollar mark in a single season.

Woods' performances this year have been simply remarkable. Masters champion Jose Maria Olazabal remarked, "Tiger is playing like the angels do." Tiger's most recent win represented his eighth victory in his last eleven tournaments. And out of the 21 tournaments which he entered in 1999, Woods placed in at least the top ten in 16 of them. Woods not only ranks first in the world as a player and in earnings, but he also leads the world in several statistical categories including, average strokes per round (68.43), percentage for hitting greens in regulation (71.4), and average birdies per round (4.46).

Known for his great distance off the tee, Woods trails only John Daly (305.6), and Chris Couch (295.8) in driving distance with 293.1 yards per drive average.

Woods is even having a great year off the links. A recent poll of viewers rated the Nike commercial which featured Woods bouncing a golf ball on the head of his golf club the highest of any commercial this year. Lets face it, Tiger's career is off to a roaring start.

The most scary aspect of Tiger's ascent is that there is still room for improvement. At 23, he's still a mere babe by golf standards. Many golfers, like the recently deceased Payne Stewart don't begin to hit their stride until their late 30's or early 40s. Tiger could conceivably dominate the sport for another 20 years and in the process, obliterate virtually every meaningful record in golf. However, much can happen over the next 20 years. As a consequence of his early successes, burnout is foremost among the possible pitfalls which could derail.

Woods. Even Michael Jordan, who is clearly the most mentally tough athlete this writer has ever seen, succumbed to it. If Woods can steer clear of such psychological obstacles, the only burning hell he's doing will be the torch he sets in the annals of the PGA record book.



Greg Moore

Historically black college receives donation from NFL owner and wife

JACKSONVILLE, FL. — Edward Waters College the 133-year-old historically black college which has provided an environment where students achieve academic, social, economic and spiritual success through appropriate development learning activities and community involvement of higher learning, has suffered financially.

Recognizing the good standards this college has set over the years led Jacksonville Jaguars owner J. Wayne and his wife Delores Barr Weaver of the Weaver Family Foundation to recently donate \$250,000 to Edward Waters College (EWC) toward the development of high quality programs and institutional stability.

The Weavers' initial \$250,000 pledge was to be distributed \$50,000 per year over 5 years, but, based on an outstanding financial stability progress report and the financials of the college, the Weaver's decided to give the remaining balance of \$200,000 to show their vote of confidence in EWC's progress.

"We are proud to support Edward Waters College and believe the Jacksonville community is better served by having this institution of higher learning here," said Delores Barr Weaver.

Since President Jimmy Jenkins' arrival in '97 enrollment has been dramatically increased; payroll has been met on time; the school received full accreditation from SAC's and the State of Florida Department of Education. Most importantly, the college has reached a settlement with the Department of Education to erase completely approximately \$4.0 million dollars liability that could have resulted in the college's demise.

"EWC is making progress in various fronts - increasing financial stability, enhancing academic programs, and attracting well-qualified faculty and staff," said Jenkins "With the help of the community and generous support from friends of the college, we are well underway to becoming the best private college in America."

The survival and prosperous future of EWC is tantamount to its ability to enroll and retain students. Colleges like EWC



Delores Barr Weaver, Weaver Foundation: President of Edwards Waters College Jimmy R. Jenkins and J. Wayne Weaver, owner of the Jacksonville Jaguars

must aggressively market themselves to attract good students. Through the partnering of various private and public organizations the college is revitalizing its fundraising infrastructure to enable it to raise necessary funds to continue its mission. Two years ago, the college implemented an aggressive search for various private gifts, governmental grants and contracts. As of May 30, 1999, the total grants and contracts increased from \$2.8 million dollars in 1995-96 fiscal year to about \$3.9 million dollars representing an increase of 39 percent. Similar amount in 1998-2000 may exceed \$4.5 million dollars.

The survival and prosperous future of EWC is tantamount to its ability to enroll and retain students. Colleges like EWC

Mayors James and White talking redevelopment



NEWARK — Recently Newark Mayor Sharpe James (left) presented Cleveland Mayor Michael White with a jersey bearing Stephen Marbury's No. 33. The presentation was made at a press conference held at the Newark Club. The conference focused on the redevelopment both in Cleveland and Newark. James introduced White as "the man who speaks for urban cities." White was in support of James' efforts to build a sports arena in downtown Newark.

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Olympic Gold Medalist Bonnie Blair

UNION — Five-time Olympic Speed Skating Gold Medalist Bonnie Blair recently gave the keynote address at Kean University's 25th Anniversary of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics celebration dinner. Celebrating the contributions of female athletes at Kean University over the last 25 years, the event was part of Kean's Homecoming festivities. Dream Teams consisting of athletes who have played at Kean, pioneering coaches and others who helped pave the way for women's intercollegiate athletics at Kean.

The most decorated Winter Olympian in history, Blair is the record holder for the most individual gold medals (five) won by an American woman in any sport, and was the first American to win three consecutive gold medals in any Winter Olympics event.

The United States Olympic Committee's Woman Speed Skater of the Year from 1985 to 1994, Blair is only one of three winter-sports athletes to win the Sullivan Award, given to the top amateur American athlete. In addition to a

sixth Olympic medal (Bronze), she is also only the second American to ever receive the Oscar, a Norwegian award presented to the world's best speed skater.

Blair retired from international competition on her 31st birthday in March of 1995 as the reigning world speed skating sprint champion.



(sweetest!)

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